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THE INFLUENCE OF INTERMEDIARY SYSTEMS ON PUBLIC SECTOR TRANSITIONS DURING A PERIOD OF AUSTERITY

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Employment Research

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DECLARATION

I confirm that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted for a degree at another university.

ABSTRACT

The influence of intermediary systems on public sector transitions during a period of austerity

The research adopted a Grounded Theory approach to support an inductive exploration of 20 participants' perceptions of the influences shaping their public sector transitions during austerity driven public sector change. Grounded theory had been a logical choice with which to research the topic of intermediary influences. These intermediary influences had needed to be inductively explored as well as understood in more depth. Storying (McCormack, 2004) the analysis of interview transcript data, to gain participant validation, had privileged the voices of participants in the construction of knowledge about them, and was found useful by them. The System Theory Framework (STF) (Patton and McMahon, 2006, 2014) was also used to both support cross case analysis of participant stories, and the theorising stage of the research that lifted findings into a substantive theory about intermediary system influence(s).

Key findings from the research included the complexity of participants' paid and unpaid work, noting their rising levels of unpaid work. Six types of intermediary systems were identified and found to be operating between participants and their work. In the context of wider influences, these intermediary systems contributed to shaping several patterns of transitions made by research participants. These patterns of transition included the following: public sector revolving door transitions accompanied by changes in employment status; remaining as employees whilst experiencing subjective transitions; geographical relocations in search of work; transitions from simple to more complex work; transitions into economic inactivity and care; and, for some, being held in transition.

In the theorising phase of the research, the original STF was unable to fully represent the research's findings about intermediary systems, paid work and unpaid work. To address this, the original STF was expanded and adapted to incorporate an intermediary and work system, amidst the original time, environment and individual systems. Furthermore, the multi-directional recursive influences of the STF had needed to be replaced with transition, setting direction, accommodation and lock (in and out) influences, to explain their effects on participants' transitions. These adaptations to the STF enabled a visual representation of all the influences shaping their transitions, along with an interpretive and substantive theory explaining how influences shaped them.

Finally, the research concludes that by drawing on an extended STF visual representation of research findings and its interpretive and substantive theory, the thesis has made three original contributions to knowledge. The first is the identification of six types of intermediary systems. The second is a public sector revolving door transition with a change in employment status, although other patterns of transition were discerned. The third contribution is the extended STF that explains how influences, including those of intermediary systems, came to shape 20 participants' transitions in work. It is hoped that these findings will support future research on the topic of intermediary systems and their influence on transitions in work, as well as support both policy and practice.

ABBREVIATIONS

ASHE	Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings
CGTM	Constructivist Grounded Theory Method
CV	Curriculum Vitae
DBIS	Department for Business Innovation and Skills
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
EASI	Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate
GFC	Global Financial Crisis
GTM	Grounded Theory Method
HCWPC	House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee
LFS	Labour Force Survey
NEA	New Enterprise Allowance
NES	New Earnings Survey
NHS	National Health Service
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PES	Public Employment Services
PE & TWA	Private Employment and Temporary work agencies
REC	Recruitment and Employment Confederation
STF	Systems Theory Framework Theory
TUC	Trade Union Congress

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GLOSSARY

Economic inactivity is defined as people not in employment who have not been seeking work within the last four weeks and/or unable to start work within the next two weeks. Office for National Statistics website

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/search?q=economic+activity> accessed 2/11/18

Influence: Patton and McMahon (2014, p.243) explain how they deliberately chose the concept of influence to describe intrapersonal and contextual factors relevant to the career development process, believing it was less static than ‘factors’ and captured the dynamics between content and process. They suggest that an influence acts as an input into an individual’s system and can relate with the system in a number of ways: a barrier or a facilitator.

Intermediary: Literature struggles to define the term intermediary, as noted in Chapter Two of the thesis. The thesis recommends that intermediary be considered an intermediary system. The definition of intermediary system is as follows:

An intermediary system consists of a combination of informal and formal interactions, intersections, conversions and convergences of people, organisations and online platforms that mutually benefit from particular transition(s) in paid and unpaid work. An intermediary system operates in a wider context of influences and, similar to these wider contextual influences, has transition, setting direction, accommodation, lock (in or out) influence on transitions into paid and or unpaid work. In some cases, an intermediary system’s influence can be mitigated by unique configurations of personal circumstances; for example, where there are sufficient funds to provide choice about whether to accept or reject various types of work.

Recursiveness: Patton and McMahon (2006, 2014) rejected the idea of influences being causal preferring Vondracek, Verbruggen and Schulenberg's (1986) notion of dynamic interaction with multidirectional relations operating in context with additional aspects. These aspects included, "...non-linear, acausal, mutual, and multidirectional, as well as ongoing relevance of past, present and future.," leading to the concept of recursiveness (Patton and McMahon, 2014, p. 254).

The thesis makes an additional contribution by identifying influences with recursionary power to trigger different effects. These effects are outlined as follows:

- **Transition or change influence:** influences with enough recursionary power to trigger a change in work, for example an unreliable umbrella company triggering adoption of a limited company employment status.
- **Setting direction influence:** influences that nudge a change in direction, for example a husband inadvertently role modelling agency contract working.
- **Accommodation influence:** adjustments to a transition or change sometimes because of learning. Accommodations were also found to sometimes be reluctant adjustments or even unconscious adjustments.
- **Lock influence:** a lock is where several influences configure to sustain or hold a change.

Story: The concept of story is referenced by Patton and McMahon as follows:

...an individual's explanation of the relevance of a particular sequence of connectedness in his or her life. (1984, p.233)

Patton and McMahon also refer to stories as narratives of meanings that can influence the teller's subsequent actions. They also refer to narratives deployed in therapeutic interventions, particularly in approaches to careers counselling.

System: Patton and McMahon's (2006, 2014) System Theory Framework is an overarching framework of wider career theories identified as sub-systems laid down in open system layers. Significant layers are context and individual systems although their representation of the therapeutic system (Figure 13.2, 2014, p.368) identifies time, environmental and social, organisational, therapeutic, and individual systems but neither work nor intermediaries as systems.

Unemployment is measured by the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and includes people who meet the international definition of unemployment specified by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) as follows:

...being without a job, have been actively seeking work in the past four weeks and are available to start in the next two week, or have found a job and expect to be starting within the following two weeks.

Office for National Statistics website

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/methodologies/aguidetolabourmarketstatistics#unemployment> accessed 28/08/2019

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCING THE THESIS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis is to present findings from research investigating how intermediary systems shaped the transitions of twenty older women during a period of England's austerity. The research intended to address a gap in knowledge, identified in the literature review, about the nature of intermediaries and their influence on transitions in work. In adopting a Grounded Theory approach, the research aimed to inductively explore its participants' perceptions of influences shaping their public sector transitions, including the influence of various intermediaries. Grounded theory was a logical choice because the research topic of intermediary influences needed to be inductively explored and required more in-depth understanding. Storying the analysis of interview transcript data, and gaining participant validation of stories concerning their transitions, ensured participants' voices came to be privileged in the construction of knowledge about intermediary systems, and participants found the storying process useful. The System Theory Framework (STF) (Patton and McMahon, 2006, 2014) has provided a useful framework through which to support cross story analysis and the theorising stage of the research: a stage that had involved lifting the findings into a substantive theory, defining the nature of intermediary system(s) and explaining their influence(s). Drawing on the research findings, the definition of intermediary system was formulated, as follows:

Definition of an Intermediary system:

An intermediary system consists of a combination of informal and formal interactions, intersections, conversions and convergences of people, organisations and online platforms that mutually benefit from particular transition(s) in paid and

unpaid work. An intermediary system operates in a wider context of influences and, similar to these wider contextual influences, has transition, setting direction, accommodation, lock (in or out) influence on transitions into paid and or unpaid work. In some cases, an intermediary system's influence can be mitigated by unique configurations of personal circumstances; for example, where there are sufficient funds to provide choice about whether to accept or reject various types of work.

The reason for focusing on older women in graduate level public sector work was because, at the time of the research, they were most likely to be in transition. A Trade Union Congress report (TUC, 2014), analysing 2012 Labour Force Survey data had provided the evidence for this. Firstly, the report noted that, at the time, 38 per cent of all 50-64 year-old women had been engaged in graduate level work (management and professional employment). Secondly, they found that 52 per cent of all 50-64 year old women had been employed in some form of public sector employment (public administration, health and education). Thirdly, and finally, that 49.2 per cent of all redundancies, for these same women, were in the public sector (Ibid., 2014, pp. 10-11). The reason for focusing on England's public sector was because the sector had been subject to Government financial cuts and demands for savings, up to 2012, and the Office for Budget Responsibility had flagged that a further 800,000 public sector jobs would need to be cut by the end of 2020 (Cribb and Sibieta, 2015). Consequently, older graduate level women were likely to be in transition and, therefore, engaging with intermediaries whilst they searched for further paid work. The reason for investigating intermediaries was because there had been a gap in knowledge, in the literature review, about how new online job search platforms, such as Linked In, CV Library and Universal Job Match¹ were influencing job seeking

¹ Linked In and CV Library are job seeking platforms that permit employers to view job seeker profiles. Universal Job Match is the Government's online job platform that is offered as part of a suite of online tools designed to support job seekers claiming Universal Credit.

experiences, especially in the context of new jobs arising in sectors receiving Government investment, as part of the Government's industrial strategy (Heseltine, 2012; H.M. Treasury, 2013), and the rising state pension age.

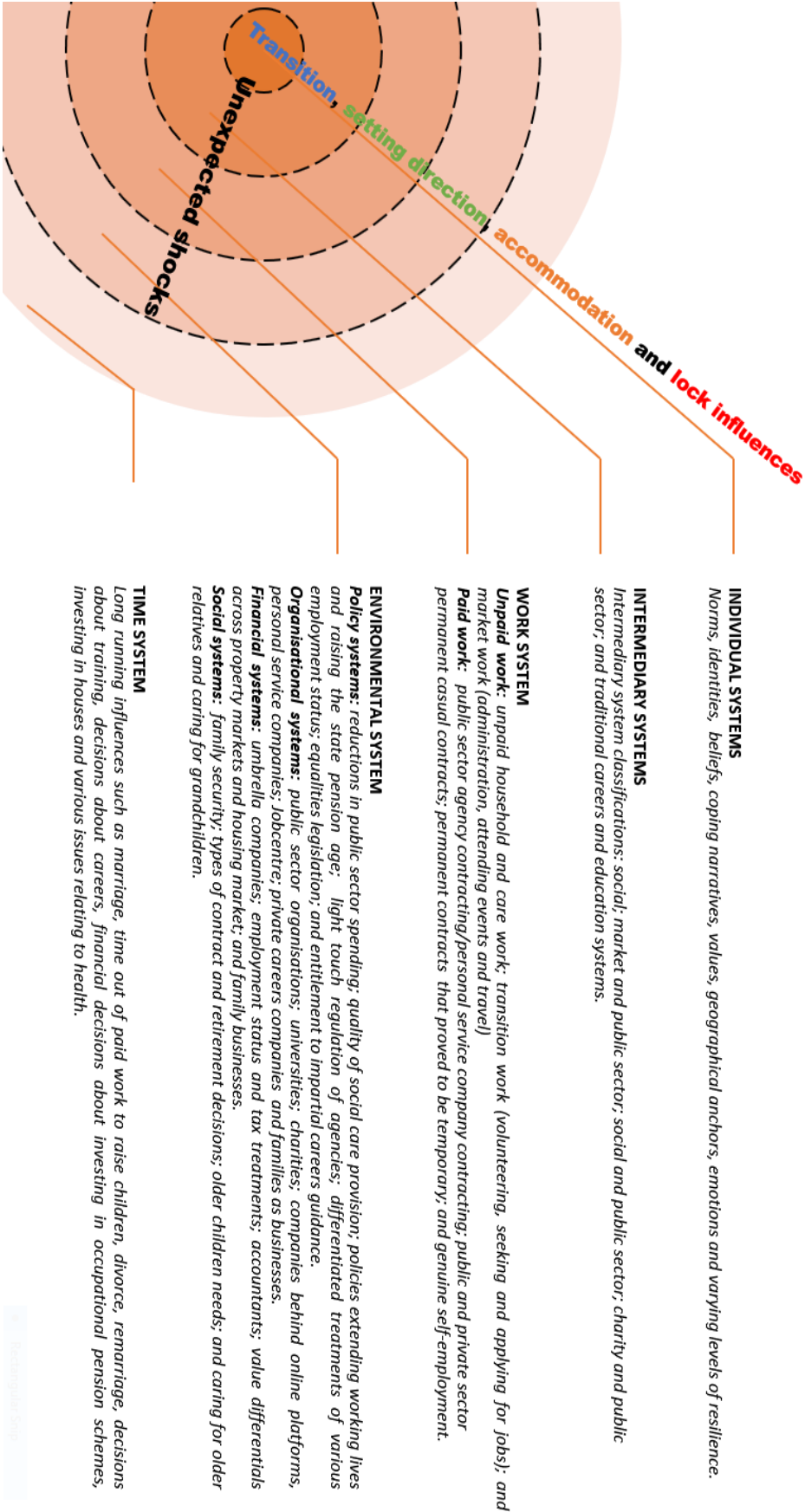
The research took place between October 2015 and April 2017 with 20 older women, aged 50 to rising state pension age. The following research question ensured the research design and implementation remained focused on addressing the knowledge gap about intermediaries, which later changed to intermediary systems.

How do a group of UK older women (aged 50 to rising state pension age) perceive the influence of intermediaries on their work transition(s) during austerity?

The thesis will go on to present four findings, the first being that participants' work had included unpaid transition work, unpaid and paid market work, and unpaid domestic and care work. Then three original contributions to knowledge, the first of these being a definition of an intermediary system and the identification and classification of six types of intermediary system. These included social intermediary systems (Type 1), market and public sector intermediary systems (Type 2), market and social intermediary systems (Type 3), social and public sector intermediary systems (Type 4), charity and public sector intermediary systems (Type 5) and traditional careers and education intermediary systems (Type 6). The second contribution is the identification of six patterns of transition, experienced by participants during this period of austerity. These patterns included public sector revolving door transitions with changes in employment status, reluctant employees experiencing subjective transitions, relocators in search of jobs, transitions from simple to complex working, transitions into economic inactivity and care and being held in transition. The third contribution, drawing on the support of the System Theory Framework (Patton and McMahon, 2006, 2014) is an interpretive and

substantive theory explaining how intermediary systems came to shape participants' transitions, in the context of wider influences during a period of austerity. The resulting extended System Theory Framework is presented below, with more detail presented in Chapter Seven.

FIGURE 1 AN EXTENDED SYSTEM THEORY FRAMEWORK



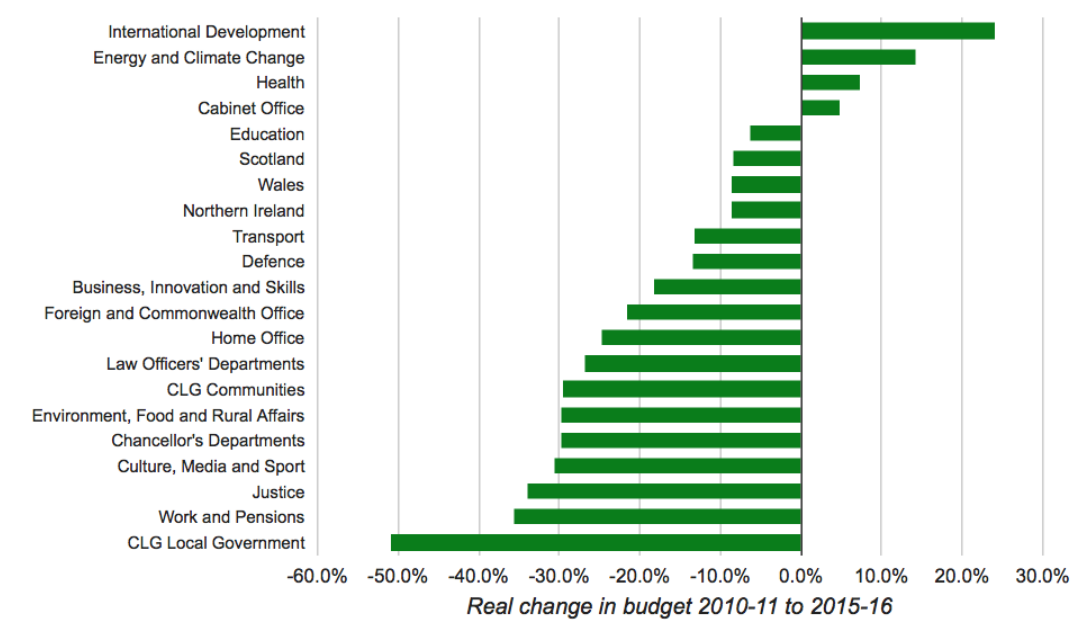
Source: System Theory Framework (Patton and McMahon 2006, 2014) adapted by the Author

1.2 SETTING THE SCENE FOR THE THESIS

In February 2007², Halifax Bank of Scotland (HBOS) alerted the public to its over-exposure to United States subprime mortgage losses. By 2009, Chancellor Alistair Darling's Spring budget had declared that UK borrowing had reached £175 billion, as a result of bailing out Northern Rock and HBOS. To address this debt, the new coalition Conservative/Liberal Democrat Government's strategy involved reducing public sector spending (H.M. Treasury, 2010). The Institute for Fiscal Studies (2015) analysis of Government spending, between 2010-11 to 2015-16, confirms where the real change budget cuts were experienced. The following graph presents the results of their analysis with Communities and Local Government and Work and Pensions experiencing significant cuts whilst the Education and Health Sectors received smaller real term percentage rises.

² Information obtained by the BBC's online interactive recession time line <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/8242825.stm> accessed 28.4.17

FIGURE 2 REAL TERM PERCENTAGE CUTS IN DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURE LIMITS, 2010-11 TO 2015-16



Note: CLG Local Government, Scotland and Wales budgets are adjusted for the effects of council tax benefit localisation and the business rates retention policy. The Defence budget includes the special reserve in 2015-16.
Source: HM Treasury, *Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2015*.

Source: Institute for Fiscal Studies (2015)

In contrast, whilst the public sector was experiencing reduced budgets and demands for savings, other sectors were in receipt of Government investment. By 2013, the Treasury and Department of Business Innovation and Skills (DBIS) had announced their adoption of Heseltine’s UK industrial strategy proposal (Heseltine, 2012; H.M. Treasury, 2013). The strategy proposal document had called for Government to invest in aerospace, agricultural technologies, automotive, construction, the information economy, international education, life sciences, nuclear, offshore wind, oil and gas, and professional and business service sectors - largely delivered through employers, with a £2 billion Government investment already delivered in the previous year (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, 2014).

At the same time, the Government had been continuing with its policy reforms to extend working lives: a further opportunity to save money. Phillipson, Vickerstaff and Lain (2016) identified five policy areas engaged in supporting workers to extend their working lives. Drawing on their findings, Table 1 summarises these policy areas and the specific policies involved:

TABLE 1 SUMMARY OF UK POLICY REFORMS EXTENDING WORKING LIVES

Policy Area	Policies
Equalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Employment Equality Age Regulations (2006): Banned direct and indirect discrimination in employment on the basis of age and outlawed unjustified compulsory retirement ages up to the age of 65. ❖ The Employment Equality (Repeal of Retirement Age Provisions) Regulations 2011: This regulation abolished the retirement default age. The law leaves open the possibility of employers defending an Employer Justified Retirement Age (EJRA).
Welfare and benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Pension Credits: Harmonisation of state pension age affects men's access to pension credits. ❖ Welfare Reform Act 2007: The move from Incapacity Benefit to Employment Support Allowance ❖ Creation of a new Health and Work Service 2014: General Practitioners can refer for occupational health support.
State Pension Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Pensions Act 1995: Raised women's state pension age to match that of men, with changes being phased in from 2010 to 2020. ❖ Pensions Act 2011: Harmonisation of women's pension age with men brought forward to 2018 and introduced an increase in state pension age for both genders to the age of 66 years from December 2018 phased in until October 2020. ❖ Pensions Act 2014: Further pension age rises to 67 by 2028 and the instigation of a regular review, every five years to take account of increases in average longevity.
Pension changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Removal of state pension earnings limit 1989: Workers can take their pensions in full whilst remaining in work. ❖ Auto enrolment into pension schemes 2012: Any worker aged over 22 and earning over £10,000 is automatically signed up to begin saving for retirement.
Flexible Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Right to request flexible working: Extended from parents to include carers from 2014 with at least 26 weeks service.

Source: Phillipson, Vickerstaff and Lain (2016)

As well as noting policy nudges across equalities, welfare and benefits, state pension age, pension changes, and flexible employment, Table 1 (p.8) draws attention to women's three state pension age rises. The first state pension age rise had brought women's pension age up to and equal to that of men's (Pensions Act 1995, enacted in 2010), the second rise to the age of 66 (Pensions Act 2011 enacted December 2018), and then again to 67 years (Pensions Act 2014 to be raised by 2027). Phillipson and colleagues refer to the Government's publication entitled "Fuller Working Lives: A Framework for Action" (DWP, 2014a) that supported their case that Government had been intent on workers remaining in work for longer. For example, the document had warned that leaving work prematurely on unplanned exits could result in "catastrophic consequences" (DWP, 2014a. p.3) for both the individual, business and society. As an aside, Phillipson and colleagues had also noted the Supporting Evidence document's reference to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP, 2014b) analysis of 2006 – 2014 Labour Force Survey (LFS) data, indicating that two thirds of economically inactive older women had previously been employed in education, health/social care, wholesale/retail and public administration:

...half of economically inactive older men had previously been working in one of just four sectors: manufacturing, construction, transport and wholesale retail. And two thirds of economically inactive older women had previously worked in education, health/social care, wholesale/retail and public administration. (DWP, 2014a, p.9)

The TUC report (2014), mentioned previously, had also described needing to deploy "detective work", in the analysis of 2012 and 2013 LFS data, to reveal how, of all the 50-64 year old women engaged in employment, 52 per cent had been employed in public administration, education or health sectors (Ibid., p.8). The relevance of this fact to the research had been that England's older women were at the forefront of Government's reduced spending on the public sector whilst being required to work

for longer, both in the context of a rising state pension age and new job opportunities becoming available in other sectors. As such, this group would have been expected to be engaging with intermediaries, later revealed as intermediary systems.

1.3 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

As an ex-careers adviser, recently made redundant from a local Borough Council, I was interested in how other older women had been experiencing their public sector transitions. For example, were they using new online intermediaries, such as Linked In, CV Library and Universal Job Match? I hoped that research on the topic would contribute to developing more effective careers advice for women in the same situation. Meanwhile, I had started my literature review and noted a number of additional unresolved issues raised by researchers examining policy. Firstly, Phillipson, Vickerstaff and Lain (2016, p.3) had drawn attention to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP, 2014 p.9) analysis of LFS data³, focusing on economically inactive women, to draw attention to the possibility that a number of older women may have been forced into economic inactivity, as they stated:

For women, two-thirds that had worked in the last eight years had previously been in four sectors: Education, Health/Social Care, Wholesale/Retail, or Public Administration. Once again, in each of these sectors, the majority of inactive women said they had left for reasons other than retiring. While this is an imperfect measure of assessing early exit, the relatively small numbers saying they took early retirement suggests that the majority of departure from employment was to some degree forced, especially in the case of women. (Phillipson, Vickerstaff and Lain, 2016, p.3)

³ Evidence derived from Fuller Working Lives: A Framework for Action: Background Evidence, London, Department for Work and Pensions, 2014, Chart C. p.32. The chart presents analysis of Labour Force Survey 3 quarter average 2013 Q2-Q4 data.

This left open the question of how these older women were experiencing forced transitions? Secondly, Coulter (2016, p.204), almost as an aside, had referred to teaching unions providing Parliament with evidence that, between 2008 and 2013, employee jobs across the education sector had risen by five per cent whilst numbers of self-employed jobs in the sector had risen by 58 per cent⁴, with no explanation of how this had been happening. Finally, Cribb, Disney and Sibietta (2014) had noted how the National Health Service (NHS) and the education sector were experiencing unprecedented level of outsourcing with elements of public service work being delivered through “private sector agencies” (Ibid, 2014, p.22), but, again, no further detail. The aim of this research, therefore, became exploring older women’s transitions through a small number of cases of older women (those aged 50 to rising state pension age and exiting public sector organisations) to gain some answers. The objective was to collect as much in-depth and rich data as possible to gain a deeper understanding of how influences, including those of intermediaries, were shaping transitions during austerity. The research design was informed by Constructivist Grounded Theory Method (CGTM) (Charmaz 2014), adopted because it provided a framework within which to explore the topic of intermediaries whilst supporting more in-depth investigation as new insights emerged, fitting the requirements of the research aims.

1.4 THE THESIS PLAN

This section outlines the structure of the thesis and provides a brief overview of what is presented in each chapter.

⁴ Written evidence given to the House of Lords Select Committee on Personal Service Companies, 2013 and cited by Coulter (2016, p. 204) as evidence for self-employed workers returning to education via agencies.

1.4.1 Chapter Two: The literature review

The literature review of extant evidence up to and including February 2017⁵ identified gaps in understanding of how intermediaries had influenced the work transition(s) of UK older women during austerity. The literature review draws on the Hollis Matrix tool⁶ (Hollis, 1994) to evaluate research material contributing to knowledge about UK work and career structure(s), transition and intermediaries. The review concludes that research tended to deploy the term ‘intermediary’ as single bounded entities, with Government also acknowledging an abstract version, in the form of various employment status or legal forms – (see Appendix 3, p.273). There was also additional evidence of public sector organisations casualising some of their workforce (Coulter, 2016; Cribb et al., 2014), and further evidence of a general trend in the UK labour market towards increasing numbers of incorporations (Adam, Miller and Pope, 2017). The Chapter concludes that, at the time of the research, a number of literatures had revealed intermediaries to be involved in both UK older women’s search for and placement into work. However, there had been no studies investigating intermediaries as intermediary systems.

1.4.2 Chapter Three: Methodology

The chapter explains how the researcher went about addressing a gap in knowledge about intermediary influences shaping older women’s transitions during austerity. It starts by outlining Charmaz’s (2014) Constructivist Grounded Theory Method, (CGTM) and the reasons why the approach was adopted. For example, it provided an opportunity to inductively explore and gain in-depth understanding of intermediary influence during austerity; its approach to intensive interviewing

⁵ February 2017 coincided with the end of doctoral fieldwork.

⁶ The Hollis Matrix tool reveals any philosophical assumptions embedded in research material. A full explanation of the tool is provided at the start of chapter two.

offered potential benefits to participants by providing them with space to reflect (Charmaz, 2014 p.87); and it supported development of a substantive theory on the research topic, albeit within ontological and epistemological limits.

The chapter provides a personal account of the research journey that describes how it was experienced, including the issues that were overcome, and the process of lifting data into a substantive theory. The first-person voice of the researcher was adopted to ensure researcher subjectivities were made explicit, to allow for a more open, accurate and authentic account of the research (Coffey, 1999; Charmaz, 2014; Hertz, 2006; McCormack, 2004; Van Manaan, 1988). Finally, the chapter evaluates the research design and journey by drawing on Charmaz's evaluation criteria of credibility, originality, resonance and usefulness. The evaluation notes how, on the one hand, the generalising powers of findings were limited by its participants lack diversity. On the other hand, the research offers more in-depth and rich data and makes three new contributions to knowledge.

1.4.3 Chapter Four: Transitions within the public sector: revolving doors, subjective transitions and relocating

The chapter reveals several intermediary systems present in the stories of different patterns of transition. For example, stories of going through a public sector revolving door (exiting as an employee and returning as a contractor) revealing complex market and public sector intermediary systems that required participants to follow agency rules, accept feelings of being a contractor outsider, displacing professional identity to cope with compromising professionalism, taking financial responsibility for professional training and development, working more flexible hours than desired, and, in some cases, adjusting to new payment systems that included converting to a limited company status. Stories of undergoing subjective transitions revealed charity based intermediary systems whilst a story of having to

relocate identified a university based intermediary system that shaped transitions into full-time undergraduate study.

1.4.4 Chapter Five: Transitions from the public sector into simple to complex working

Chapter five presents the stories of five women who transitioned from public sector work to engage with more complex working patterns and arrangements. Unlike the participants in Chapter Four, their services had not been in demand by market and public sector intermediary systems. Instead, they had needed to rely more heavily on social intermediary systems and traditional careers and education intermediary systems. Social intermediary systems had tended to include ex-work colleagues in the same precarious situations, and, unsurprisingly, these had gone on to facilitate further precarious contracts. Stories of engagement with a Type six intermediary system had involved participants situating the Jobcentre as the intermediary to be avoided, a barrier to new enterprise and an instigator of becoming trapped in unsatisfactory work.

The nature of the work facilitated by these intermediary systems had primarily been short-term contracts. The participants engaged in simple to complex work transition had needed to devote more unpaid transition work to gain access to contracts. For some participants, adding this kind of work to their pre-existing, unpaid domestic and care work had left them exhausted whilst for others, who could afford to pick and choose contract offers, less so. The accommodations required of participants to sustain more complex contracting included providing more unpaid market work in repeated efforts to gain the next contract, converting social relationships into social intermediary systems (with some evidence of collateral damage to friendships), learning to manage complex working arrangements, and, in one case, risking family financial capital to launch a new property business.

1.4.5 Chapter Six: Transitions from public sector employment into economic inactivity, unemployment and care

The chapter is based on the stories of an education sector administration manager, counsellor, contract public sector manager and a media executive. It describes the influences shaping their transitions, including those of intermediary systems. These were a social intermediary system, market and public sector intermediary system and traditional careers and education intermediary system. The story involving the market and public sector intermediary system had been about becoming locked out of ongoing contracting, as a result of needing more flexible contracting arrangements, to provide more care for an elderly relative. In general, these participants' transition stories revealed the premature ending of public sector careers and engagement with casual and insecure work, unpaid work, and unpaid domestic and care work. A map of the influences shaping these transitions identified no individual influence shaping their transitions, rather many situated across wider environment, organisation and individual systems, including those of intermediary systems. Examples of accommodations required to adjust to this transition included drawing on identities of student, semi-retired, retired, carer, housewife, between contracts – enabling participants to avoid the perceived stigma of unemployment and economic inactivity. Furthermore, a number of participants also needed to accept significant occupational pension penalties due to prematurely drawing on their pensions.

1.4.6 Chapter Seven: Extending the system theory framework and the role played by intermediary systems

This chapter draws on all the research findings to, finally, answer the research question: How do a group of UK older women (aged 50 to rising state pension age) perceive the influence of intermediaries on their work transition(s) during

austerity? The chapter concludes that not only does it address the question with its new interpretive and substantive theory, supported by an extended System Theory Framework (see Figure 1, p.5), it makes new and original contributions to knowledge. These include firstly, a theoretical contribution in the form of the research's new interpretive and substantive theory. Secondly, a conceptual contribution by reconceptualising intermediaries as intermediary systems with transition, setting direction and lock influence on transitions. Thirdly, participants' patterns of transition are also represented, however, the revolving door transition with a change in employment status is the only transition claimed as the third, and final, contribution to knowledge.

1.4.7 Chapter Eight: Conclusions and implications for policy and practice

This chapter confirms the research's new and original contributions to knowledge. The first is a theoretical contribution in the form of a new interpretive and substantive theory, supported by an extended STF. The second, a reconceptualisation of the concept of intermediary as an intermediary system with transition, setting direction and lock influences. Third, amongst several patterns of transition, a new revolving door transition that involves a change in employment status. Next, the chapter reflects on the research journey to support thinking about future research on the topic of intermediary systems. Then, considers the implications of the research findings for policy whilst acknowledging the findings' ontological limits. Finally, the chapter returns to the research question to confirm it has been addressed.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature review, up to and including February 2017⁷, identified gaps in our understanding of how intermediaries influenced the work transition(s) of UK older women during austerity. A number of studies were found to touch on elements of the topic, and these are listed in Appendix 1 (p.271). This Appendix also distinguishes between features of the doctoral thesis and studies that were similar. Before presenting literature review evidence, the Hollis Matrix tool (Hollis, 1994) is introduced as the tool used to reveal any underpinning ontological and epistemological assumptions in the review's evidence.

Hollis (1994) describes ontology as what is there, epistemology as being a theory of knowledge, and methodology as ways of accessing that knowledge. A depiction of the tool is presented in the figure below.

FIGURE 3 HOLLIS MATRIX

	EXPLANATIONS	UNDERSTANDING
HOLISM	SYSTEMS	GAMES
INDIVIDUALISM	AGENTS	ACTORS

SOURCE: HOLLIS (1994, P.16)

⁷ February 2017 coincided with the end of doctoral fieldwork.

In the literature review, literatures situated on the explanation side of the matrix tended to assume facts existed in the social world just waiting to be discovered (ontology), and by adopting objective data collection methods (scientific methods) empirical regularities (also associated with naturalism and positivism) would be found. The importance of regularities, to studies situated on this side of the matrix, lay in their power to support causal explanations. These literatures believed that such regularities could be generalised, in some cases with powers of prediction. At the epistemological level, these papers assumed that the researcher could be objective, detached from the objects of their study, and that they had obtained impartial data. Examples of data collection methods, used to obtain objective data, included the administering of questionnaires or surveys. 'Holism' refers to approaches that account for individual behaviour as a result of a larger 'system' whilst 'individualism' refers to the contrary. Debates on the explanation side of the matrix tended to focus on direction of influence from agent to system or the other way. They also focused on levels of determinism (influence of system over individual) and free will (agency).

Literature situated on the understand side of the Hollis Matrix placed emphasis on interpreting and understanding meanings of actions (complexity) rather than establishing their causes. Hollis identifies four kinds of meaning: meaning that relates to human action as intentions and these can be influenced by ideas, emotions and values. For example, flags dropped to half-mast will only be identified as mourning through meanings; countless observations will not uncover such meaning. The second meaning arises from language and the requirement of other humans to understand and interpret that language. A third relates to humans being able to draw on mutually constructed practices underpinned by norms and beliefs (games), and the fourth form of meaning where humans are capable of constructing theories about others and then acting upon them. In this situation, knowledge can be derived from the co-construction of practices and institutions. It is also worth noting that meanings can also become reality (or even fact), for example the 'game' of tenant and

landlord (socially constructed concepts) is capable of constructing homelessness that can become a fact for a homeless person undergoing the experience.

The chapter moves on to present the literature review's evidence, organised into four sections. The first section presents the reviewed evidence that was excluded because of an absence of any references to intermediaries. The second section focuses on evidence confirming that UK older professional women were exiting public sector organisations, along with some relevant contextual information about the nature of their work. The third section presents evidence of the following: what was known about transition(s) in work; the effects of job loss and job seeking on personal wellbeing; and literatures reconceptualising the meaning of transition. Finally, the fourth section benchmarks knowledge about intermediaries and their influence on transition, noting any gaps in knowledge.

2.2 EXCLUDED LITERATURES

The literature search focused on the research question's concepts of work, transition, gender, age, policy and intermediaries. Various library search engines were deployed, for example: University of Warwick general library search engine; JSTOR (E-Journal and e-book platform); Oxford Scholarship Online; Sociological Abstracts (ProQuest); Scopus; International Bibliography of the Social Sciences; Google Scholar; and Gov.UK. Table 2 (p.20), presented next, briefly summarises this excluded evidence arising from gender, age and ageing, organisations and careers literatures. As mentioned earlier, the evidence was excluded because of an absence of any references to intermediaries.

TABLE 2 LITERATURES REVIEWED AND EXCLUDED

LITERATURES REVIEWED AND EXCLUDED		
Gender Literatures		
Subject(s)	Themes/debates	Representative authors
Sociology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's paid and (invisible) unpaid work. Unpaid work includes caring for parents/children/grandchildren and can be described as double shifting • Women's work situated in a relational cultural paradigm: meaning making through relationships is part of understanding work in women's lives • Work life balance literatures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - gender roles - managing time - equilibrium -employers' responsibilities -outsourcing home responsibilities - the consequences of imbalance leading to stress/burnout • Labour aesthetics: commodifying age and look to represent and enhance corporate brands • Prime age and look: too young or too old to be promoted whilst prime age is usually a time of raising children • The idea that women make work preferences is contested by social norm theories, socialisation theories and embedded labour market systemic disadvantage literatures. 	<p>Hochschild (1989) Oakley (1974)</p> <p>Richardson and Schaeffer (2013)</p> <p>Man-Yee Kan (2001) Lyonette (2015) Hochschild (2003, 2013)</p> <p>Wolf (1991) Warhurst (2009) Duncan and Loretto (2004)</p> <p>Hakim (2007) Radl (2012) Roberts (2015)</p>
Sociology/ Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women as a reserve army of labour drawn on by Government as an economic fiscal instrument 	<p>Bruegel (1979) McKay, Campbell, Thomson and Ross (2013)</p>
Geography Vocational Behaviour Sociology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilities literature: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - new family forms involving living apart - gender imbalance of "commuter families" enabling parents to seize distant work opportunities and preserve family roots -commuting solutions adopted by British dual career families to keep the family together and emergence of dual location households - females do more domestic work even when both partners were engaged in extensive commuting - Women's family careers can disrupt paid work career and usually the female parent compromises career stakes to find a workable solution – see trailing spouse 	<p>Levin (2004) Van der Klis and Karsten (2009)</p> <p>Green (2015)</p> <p>Haasler (2015)</p> <p>Doherty and Lassig (2013) Green (2015)</p>

Age/ageing Literatures		
Sociology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour market policies and cumulative (dis) advantage by later career • Importance of lifecourse perspectives and increasing role of uncertainty within those perspectives • Institution of the life course is being destandardised – end of lock step progression: school, work, retirement in the context of new work flexibilities. • Active ageing in the context of globalisation and increasing polarisation of good and bad jobs • The role of age norms and stereotypes • Negative subject identities for older workers exist in discourse about job seeking and enterprise • Gendered ageism and intersectional ageism • Social construction of skills/gender pay gap 	<p>Bennet and Mohring (2015)</p> <p>Loretto, Vickerstaff and White (2007)</p> <p>Kohli (2007)</p> <p>Radl (2012)</p> <p>Ainsworth and Hardy (2008)</p> <p>Moore (2009)</p> <p>Warhurst (2014)</p>
Social policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues for social policy seeking to extend working life: regional disparities in employment opportunities; assumes employers can accommodate older worker health issues – largely untested; assumes that flexible working can contribute to active ageing - ignoring reports of underemployment; fails to take account of gendered differences in experiences of flexible working; and gendered norms associated with age of retirement. • UK Government is gender blind in its roll out of extending access to pensions policy • Equalities Act fails to address intersectional discrimination in organisations 	<p>Phillipson and Smith (2005)</p> <p>Bell and Rutherford (2013)</p> <p>Loretto and Vickerstaff (2015)</p> <p>Grady (2015)</p> <p>Moore (2009)</p>
Gerontology and Critical Gerontology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debates on “identity of age” and cognitive decline/health • Meaning of concepts associated with age and ageing – the issue of language • Issue of heterogeneity of “older worker” for policy purposes – policy acting as an overly blunt instrument 	<p>Gullette (2008)</p> <p>Cruikshank (2008)</p> <p>Greller (1999)</p> <p>Phillips, Ajrouch and Hillocoat-Nelletamby (2010)</p>
Psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debates on changes in cognitive function during the ageing process 	<p>Literature reviewed by Greller, (1999)</p>

Human resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Debates concerning older workers decline in productivity and performance How organisations need to adapt to retain older employees 	Barth, McNaught and Rizzi, 1993 Hedge (2008)
Organisational literatures		
Sociology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women's minority status at the top of corporations – glass ceiling Gendered ageing and discrimination Gendered ageing and technology Gendered attitudes towards flexible working 	Ely (1995) Riach and Kelly (2015) Moore (2009) Duncan and Lorretto (2004) Walker, Grant, Meadows and Cook (2007) Halford (2015) Loretto and Vickerstaff (2015)
Human Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisations and flexible working for older employees New managerialism: the idea of work being able to be broken down into discrete specifications and transferrable skills Debates for and against public sector outsourcing: does outsourcing result in lowering employee wages and conditions; do public sector organisations save money; and does the result of outsourcing reduce the quality of services? Experiences of chronic job insecurity in the public sector 	Arrowsmith and McGoldrick (1997) Herriot and Pemberton (1995) Mori (2015) Vrangbaek, Petersen, and Hjelmar (2013) Jensen and Stonecash (2004) Collins (1998)
Careers Literature		
Vocational behaviour	<p>Approaches to career theory:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Person-environment fit theories/matching models Developmental models Gottfredson's Theory of Circumspection and Compromise Social Cognitive Career Theory associated with self-efficacy Career Construction Theories - Life Design Theory Debate: careers versus personal counselling Psychology of working: objective and subjective meanings of work 	Holland (1959) Super, Savickas and Super (1996) Gottfredson (1996) Lent (2008) Savickas (2013) Richardson (1996) Blustein (2006)

The literature search also revealed contextual policy evidence, and this has been included in Chapter One (section 1.2) of the thesis because it helped to set the scene

for introducing its research question. This evidence included the Coalition Government's austerity measures that aimed to reduce the UK's public sector departments' budgets (Heseltine, 2012; HM Treasury, 2013; Institute for Fiscal Studies, 2015), the Government's intention to extend workers' working lives (DWP, 2014a; DWP 2014b; Phillipson et al, 2016), a puzzle involving the rising numbers of self-employed in certain public sector departments (Coulter, 2016, p.2014; Cribb et al, 2014) and, finally, the rising numbers of women registering as economically inactive - possibly due to forced exits from public sector organisations (Phillipson et al, 2016, p.3).

2.3 UK WORK AND CAREER STRUCTURE (S)

Literature investigating UK work and career structure could be situated on both sides of the Hollis Matrix. The account starts with Hollis explanation side literature, drawing on American literature noting a rise in new forms of work and an increase in precarious employment. It then introduces evidence from economic literature attempting to explain polarising patterns in UK labour market data. Finally, the section provides evidence of gender and age labour market patterns that were a cause for concern amongst interest groups such as Trade Unions and others. Evidence from literature situated on the Hollis Matrix understanding side shifts the concept of structure to context, and draws from a smaller number of participants, but the evidence is of a more complex nature. Explanation side evidence is presented first with understanding side evidence to follow.

2.3.1 UK work and career structure in structure (Hollis explain side studies)

From the end of the 20th century, sociology, economics and vocational psychology scholars have commented on the decline in breadwinner types of employment, and a corresponding rise in flexible forms of work across developed nations (Arthur and

Rousseau, 2001; Sennett, 1998; Standing, 2011). Savickas (2008) situates the trend at the turn of the 20th to 21st century, amidst global shifts, described as follows:

...industrialisation to digitalisation, urbanisation to globalisation and immigration to migration... (all) leading to a rapidly changing world, companies maintain(ing) flexibility by downsizing, outsourcing, flattening and restructuring. (Savickas, 2008, p.108)

Scholars, writing before the 2007 global financial crisis⁸, adopted either negative or positive perspectives on the trend. Positive perspectives included interpreting flexible work as 'protean' (Hall, 1996), 'boundaryless' (Arthur and Rousseau, 2001) and 'kaleidoscopic' (Mainero and Sullivan, 2005). Protean careers were described as offering opportunity for self-generating and self-managed work with potential for alignments with personal values and lifestyle preferences (Hall, 1996). Boundaryless careers were described as offering freedom from the organisation, opportunities for multiple contracting and more varied and creative work (Arthur and Rousseau, 2001). Finally, 'kaleidoscope' forms of career (Mainero and Sullivan, 2005) were used to describe the way in which young women were able to blend childcare responsibilities with paid work, assuming they returned after having children.

Literature adopting a more negative perspective (Sennett, 1998; Standing, 2011) viewed the rise of flexible employment as a sign of global capitalism's drift into a

⁸ On the 8th February 2007, the BBC announced that HSBC had made a significant loss at its US mortgage arm, Household Finance, due to subprime losses. This was one of the first signs that the US housing market had turned sour with knock on effects felt across the global financial sector.

dystopia. Sennett's (1998) seminal work, focusing on the USA, noted the decline in manufacturing breadwinner careers ⁹ with a corresponding rise in flexible employment across personal supply, computer and Government services. Incidentally, he also noted a corresponding fall in productivity, union membership, a rise in part-time work and a fall in earnings - especially when workers frequently changed jobs. Sennett (1998) also expressed concern with the levels of uncertainty and fatigue created by flexible employment.

Sennett's (1998) views were echoed by Standing (2011, 2015) who warned that flexible employment was constituting a new class: the precariat. He described a precariat's work as:

...insecure and unstable, so that it is associated with casualisation, informalisation, agency-labour, part-time labour, phoney self-employment and the new mass-phenomenon of crowd-labour. (2015, p.6)

Finally, it is also worth noting that Standing mentions the existence of agency labour (2015, p.3), but does not elaborate on the nature or influence of agencies on worker transitions.

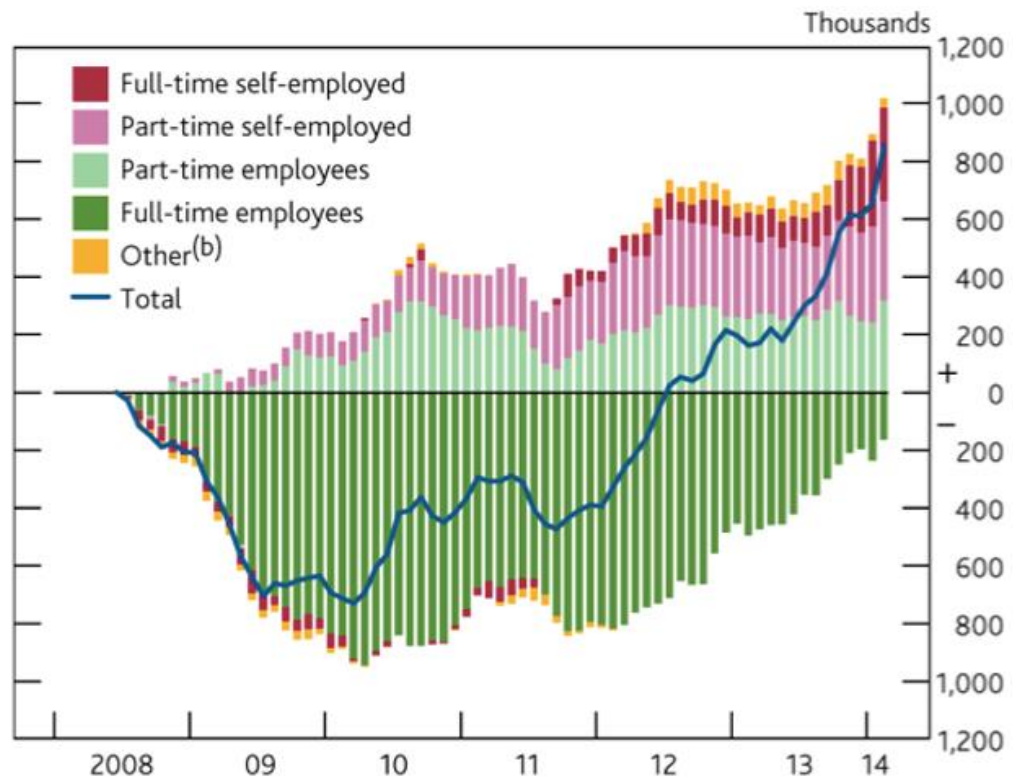
Moving on in time, literature arising from economics and focusing on UK Labour Force Survey (LFS), New Earnings Survey (NES) and Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) data starts to attempt explanations for polarising patterns

⁹ Sennett presents the Ford automotive worker as an example of 'traditional' work. The example tends to be male, involves a job for life, receiving a living wage and ends in retirement with a pension. Later studies contrast this model with contract work also known as flexible work.

emerging from the data. The focus of much UK economic literature shifts to explaining these patterns. For example, Goos and Manning's (2003) analysis of 1975–1999 LFS and NES data identified a rising demand for well-paid jobs requiring non-routine skills; a rising demand for low-paid, less skilled jobs requiring non-routine manual skills; and a fall in demand for middle skilled (craft and manufacturing) jobs requiring routine manual skills. Part of their explanation, for the (hourglass) polarising pattern, was that routine skilled jobs were being replaced by technology. In contrast, Salvatori (2015) analysing LFS, NES and ASHE data, from 1979 to 2012, concluded that the effect might be explained by an increasing share of graduates in the labour market, and a reallocation of employment classifications from middle to top. It is also worth noting that Working Futures reports have identified similar trends, predicting they will continue up to at least 2024 (UKCES 2015).

Bringing the debate up to date, Coulter's (2016) explanation for the continuation of the polarising trend (up to 2014) arose from his efforts to solve the puzzle of why, despite the UK's recent recession and cuts to public sector finances, there had not been a corresponding rise in unemployment figures? His explanation starts with the observation that from 2008-2014 the UK experienced a fall in the numbers of full-time jobs and a corresponding rise in the number of part-time and self-employed jobs. He presents his evidence in the form of a graph that is reproduced in Figure 4 (p. 27).

FIGURE 4 CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CHANGE IN THE WHOLE ECONOMY EMPLOYMENT SINCE 2008 Q2 (A)



Labour Force Survey notes concerning the data:

(a) Rolling three month measure. First data point is June 2008. Contributions may not sum to total due to rounding.

(b) Comprises unpaid family workers and those on government supported training and employment programmes classified as being in employment.

Source: Bank of England Inflation Report (2014) in Coulter (2016, p.202)

Coulter (2016) notes that from 2008 to 2014, there was a fall in employment across high paying sectors and a corresponding rise in employment across low paying sectors (see Coulter's evidence reproduced in Appendix 2 (p.272). Falls in employment were observed across public administration and defence jobs: both funded by Government and known for offering well-paid, permanent, full-time,

quality jobs. Meanwhile, employment rose across accommodation, food services, human health and social work sectors, associated with low pay, part-time and precarious contract work.

Finally, Coulter (2016) goes on to acknowledge previous explanations for why employment figures remained high; for example, active labour market policies, lower levels of employment protection legislation, private sector labour hoarding, and capital shallowing¹⁰. However, he argues that by far the most significant explanation for the polarizing phenomenon was austerity driven sector change. The change resulted in a decrease in full time permanent contracts and an increase in flexible forms of employment.

Almost as an aside, Coulter mentioned how he was also “suspicious” (p.204) that public sector employers may have been replacing outgoing employees with temporary supply staff, through private agencies. He cited evidence provided by teaching unions to Parliament that, between 2008 and 2013, employee jobs across the education sector had risen by five per cent, but the number of self-employed jobs in the sector had risen by 58 per cent (p.204)¹¹. Cribb and colleagues (2014) also noted how both NHS and Education had experienced unprecedented levels of outsourcing and that elements of public service work were being delivered through “private sector agencies” (2014, p.22). The relevance of these references will

¹⁰ Labour hoarding is where employers hold headcount despite reduced demand, and capital shallowing is where the fall in the price of labour relative to the cost of capital encourages firms to substitute labour for equipment (Pessoa and Van Reenen 2014, cited in Coulter, 2016, p.221)

¹¹ Written evidence given to the House of Lords Select Committee on Personal Service Companies, 2013 and cited by Coulter (2016, p. 204) as evidence for self-employed workers returning to education via agencies.

become apparent in Chapters Five and Seven of the thesis, in accounts of how market and public sector intermediary systems influenced these types of transition.

Again, moving on in time, from 2012 to 2014, a plethora of published reports noted changes in UK older women's employment patterns during austerity. Pieces of information, derived from across the reports, built a picture of what might have been happening. Firstly, the Trade Union Congress (TUC) report, "Age Immaterial, Women Over 50 in the Work Place," described needing to deploy "*detective work*" (2014, p.8) to identify changes in UK older women's work pattern during austerity. Their work uncovered a rise in the numbers of UK older women being made redundant from public sector jobs and a significant number of women in the economically inactive group wanting a job. Drawing on 2012 and 2013 LFS data, Table 3 below noted that 52 per cent of 50-64-year-old women were employed in public administration, education and health professions, otherwise known as the public sector.

TABLE 3 WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY AND AGE GROUP, APRIL-JUNE 2012 (%)

Profession	16-24	25-49	50-64	Total
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	0.4	0.5	0.9	0.7
Manufacturing	3.4	5.8	5.1	5.3
Construction	0.8	1.9	2.0	1.8
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	41.5	16.8	17.4	20.3
Transport and communication	3.7	4.6	3.7	4.2
Banking and finance	13.3	17.3	13.2	15.7
Public admin, education and health	25.5	46.8	52.0	45.2
Other services	10.8	5.5	5.2	6.2
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Trade Union Congress Report (2014, p.10) drawing on LFS 2012 and 2013 data

Table 4 below noted that of all women aged 50-64 made redundant during April - June 2012, 49.2 per cent came from public administration, education and health backgrounds.

TABLE 4 WOMEN'S REDUNDANCIES BY INDUSTRY AND AGE GROUP, APRIL-JUNE 2012(%)

Profession	16-24	25-49	50-64	Total
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.8
Manufacturing	13.0	13.0	3.4	10.6
Construction	12.5	5.6	0.0	5.7
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	37.2	23.3	18.5	25.1
Transport and communication	3.7	8.2	6.8	6.9
Banking and finance	22.6	20.0	12.2	18.5
Public admin, education and health	11.1	23.0	49.2	27.1
Other services	0.0	5.4	10.0	5.4
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Trade Union Congress Report (2014, p.10) drawing on LFS 2012 and 2013 data

Figures for women's economic inactivity (see Table 5, p.31) showed a significant fall in the number of women not wanting a job and a rise in the numbers wanting a job. However, interpreting the Table was challenging because of rises in women's state pension age. For example, those not wanting a job may have already been in receipt of state pension, and those wanting a job may have been incentivised by knowledge of a future rise in the state pension age.

**TABLE 5 ECONOMICALLY INACTIVE WOMEN WHO WANT AND DO NOT WANT A JOB (000's)
AGED 16-64**

Period	Does not want a job	Wants a job	Total
Sep-Nov 2008	4,619	1,254	5,873
Sep-Nov 2013	4,299	1,346	5,645
Change	-320	92	-228

Source: Trade Union Congress Report (2014, p.10) drawing on LFS 2008 and 2013

The following Table 6 suggests a fall in the numbers of women 'looking after family/home' and 'retired' categories, and again these figures might be explained by the rise in state pension age. It is interesting to note that there is no explanation for a rise in the 'other' category.

TABLE 6 REASONS FOR ECONOMIC INACTIVITY OF WOMEN AGED 16-64 (000's)

Period	Total	Students	Looking after family/home	Temp sick	Long-term sick	Retired	Other
Sep-Nov 2008	5,873	1,012	2,139	88	1,056	1094	463
Sep-Nov 2013	5,644	1,121	2,063	94	992	883	466
Change	-229	109	-76	6	-64	-211	3

Source: Trade Union Congress Report (2014, p.10) drawing on LFS 2008 and 2013 data

Of course, the challenge of interpreting tables examining women in economic inactivity is their tendency to incorporate women from the age of 16 to 64. As a

result, the situation of older women in economic inactivity becomes impossible to discern.

Cribb and colleagues (2014) noted that from 2012-13, 57 per cent of workers across the public sector were qualified up to higher education level (2014, p.17). This suggests that many of the 2012 older women made redundant may also have previously occupied graduate level jobs in the public sector.

At the same time, various reports were being published by organisations with an interest in women's rights and or older workers. For example, the Fawcett Society published a report (2014) that drew on combined LFS data, their own survey data (results from 1003 low paid women), focus group consultations and in-depth interview data (numbers not specified). The report sought to explain why 2008-2014 LFS data showed men's unemployment figures rising and then levelling off, whereas women's unemployment figures rose beyond the men's turning point, and then levelled off. The report's explanations were that men were being absorbed into male dominated private sector employment, whereas women were tending to drift more slowly into flexible work. In addition, they noted the significant rise, from June 2013 to June 2014, in women's self-employment figures of 150,000 (Office for National Statistics (ONS), EMP01, June 2014, cited in: Fawcett Society, 2014, p.8). They offered two possible explanations: self-employment was being used to disguise unemployment, or the women were needing to become self-employed to re-contract back to the public sector organisations they had just left.

Additional reports identified four possible risks to older women during austerity. These risks were as follows: remaining behind in a downsized public sector organisations and being required to manage an ever increasing workload; becoming economically inactive, also identified as "catastrophic" early retirement (Prince

Initiative for Mature Enterprise, 2014, p.18); job search taking longer than those of younger counterparts; and finally, risks of fatigue whilst juggling paid work and care, in some cases being combined with searching for jobs (TUC, 2014).

To summarise, pre-2007 studies debating the value of breadwinner over flexible jobs tended to take a gender-neutral stance, or, at best, a young woman's perspective (see the kaleidoscope form) with little or no references made to the experiences of older women. Studies investigating polarising trends in UK survey data, able to be situated on the explain side of the Hollis Matrix, tended to present either gendered or gender-neutral headcount figures, but failed to offer data that combined gender and age - rendering older women invisible. Even Coulter's austerity driven sector change explanation makes no reference to combined age and gender patterning across sectors affected by the change. It is a TUC report, (2014) deploying what they describe as detective work, that offered the first insight into the impact of Government public sector funding cuts on older women's jobs. However, even this report needs to be treated with some caution. Any study relying on UK national survey data has to allow for the fact that LFS data, itself, is open to the challenge of self-reporting bias, particularly in the case of job title inflation. Furthermore, NES and ASHE data relies on employer submissions that assumes all employers, across all sectors, equally submit data.

Finally, evidence reviewed here reveals an emerging, but limited, picture of the position of UK older women in austerity. At the time of this review, a significant number of older women would have been employed in the public sector and, consequently, would have either been experiencing chronic job insecurity or redundancy. A number of these women, possibly, going on to transition into economic inactivity and finding themselves in the 'want jobs' category. Others may have been returning to public sector organisations, but under different contractual arrangements (Fawcett, 2014). Additional information, arising from interest group

surveys, interviews and focus groups (Fawcett society, 2014; Princes Initiative for Mature Enterprise, 2014; TUC, 2014) would suggest a number of women may also have remained in public sector organisations, balancing increased workloads with their domestic and care work.

2.3.2 UK work and career in context/structure (Hollis understand side studies)

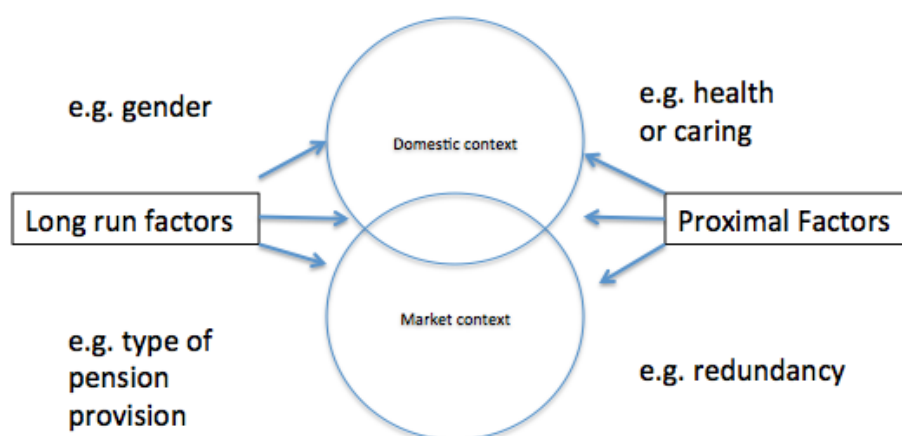
Studies contributing to understanding older women's work and career in context/structure, tended to rely on data collected in interviews with smaller numbers of participants. Participants were usually interviewed once and were prompted, through interview protocols, to recall past events, resulting in retrospective data. Relevant findings and issues arising from these studies are presented next.

Three studies, noting the influence of context on work, are particularly relevant because they drew on interview data, collected from UK older women, during austerity. For example, Loretto and Vickerstaff's (2012) study involved interviews with older couples making retirement decisions; Cohen and Duberly's (2015) study consisted of interviews with ex-public sector senior managers, including older women; and Bimrose, McMahon and Watson's (2015) study analysed survey and interview data collected from across nine countries, including England. All three studies revealed the complexity of context and its influence on older women's work, and their findings are presented next.

Past and present divisions of labour between market and family work were found to influence the timing, planning and meaning of retirement for 57 couples (Loretto and Vickerstaff, 2012). Furthermore, couples interview data revealed that although

money was an important influence it was often overridden by domestic context considerations; for example, these included health problems, caring responsibilities or long-term divisions of work between spouses. Moreover, Loretto and Vickerstaff found evidence of women and men, generally, taking different pathways into retirement. For example, married women were more likely to give social reasons for intending to carry on working, whereas men focused more on financial dimensions. Job quality and job satisfaction also emerged as incentives to carry on working, especially for women. Loretto and Vickerstaff's model of how context influences couples' decisions to retire is outlined in Figure 5, (p.35).

FIGURE 5 COUPLES RETIREMENT DECISION MAKING MODEL



Source: Loretto and Vickerstaff, 2012, p.74

The model shows decisions being made at the intersection of market and domestic contexts, shaped by external factors such as gender, health or caring and pension provision. Interestingly, the model is also time sensitive by accounting for more long running factors.

Reference to past contextual influence is echoed in Cohen and Duberly's (2015) study of 11 ex-social services senior managers, (including older women) who continued to meet after voluntary redundancy, from the same Council department, between 2010 and 2011. Analysis of their interview and focus group data revealed the existence of a generational epoch constituting three interlinking context faces. The following Table 7 simplifies their findings with a more detailed account to follow.

TABLE 7 SUMMARY OF A GENERATIONAL EPOCH (COHEN AND DUBERLY, 2015)

Context faces	Dimensions	Links between faces
Ideology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social values • Attitudes • Perceptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being trained at the same time and in the same way (ideology) • Working in the same organisation (structure) • All working for a Labour Council for a significant amount of time (linking ideology and structure)
Structural features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political environment • Domestic arrangements and responsibilities 	
Proximal events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial crisis • Personal contingencies 	

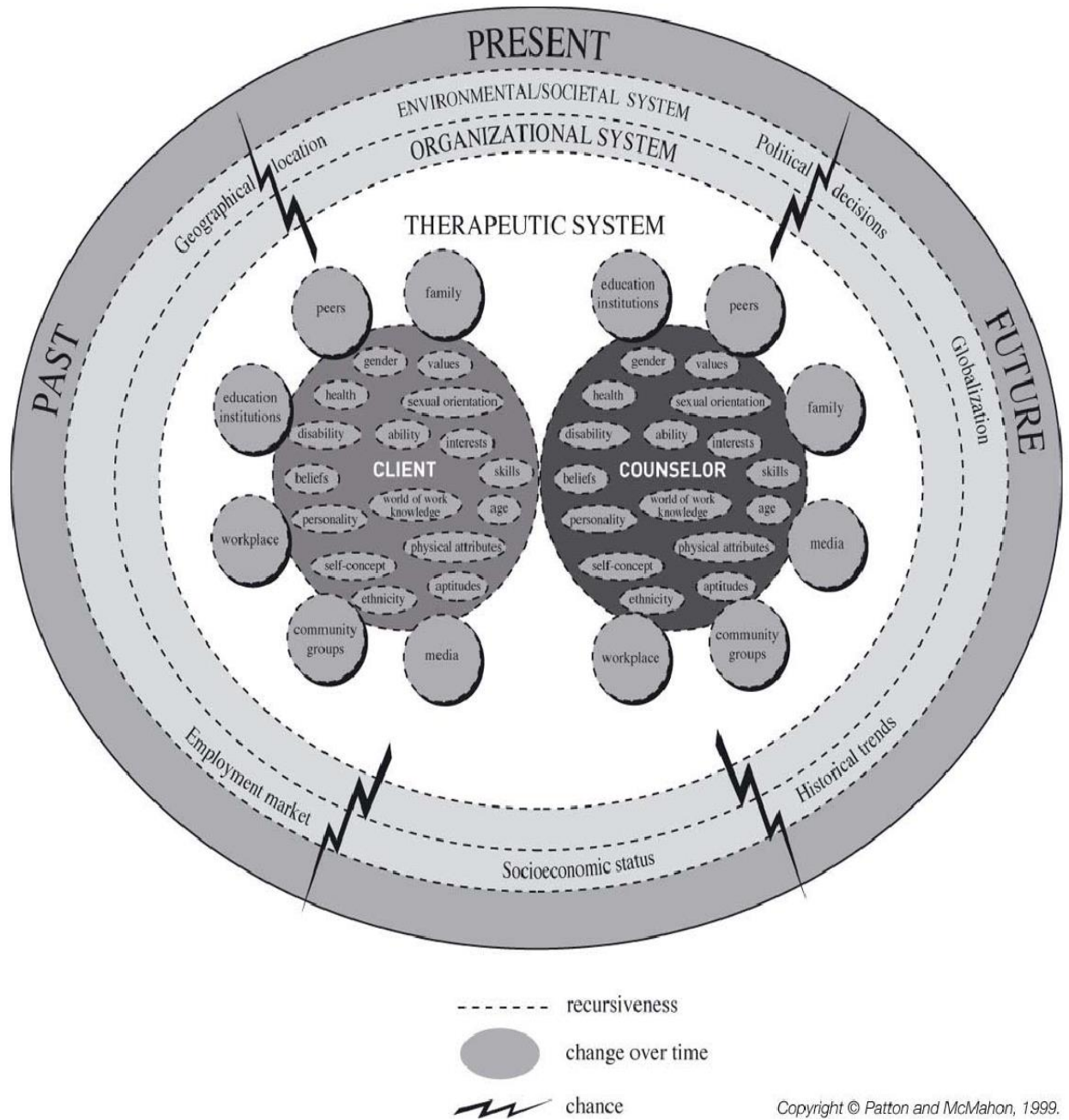
Source: Compiled by the author

Drawing on Table 7, their participants' generational epoch had consisted of the contextual faces labelled as ideology, structural features and proximal events. Each of these context faces had several dimensions: the dimensions of ideology being social values, attitudes and perceptions; structural features as political environment, domestic arrangements and responsibilities; and proximal events as financial crisis and personal contingencies. There had also been links between the context faces; for example, interviewees having been trained at the same time and in the same way

(ideology); long term tenure in the same organisation (linked to structure); and for a long term Labour Council (linked ideology and structure). Of note, the managers had gone on to take voluntary redundancy when a newly elected Conservative Council had introduced changes that had jarred with their generational epoch.

Unlike the two previous studies, Bimrose, McMahon and Watson's (2015) international study explained their finding by drawing on a pre-existing theory. This was called the System Theory Framework theory, summarised in Figure 6 (p. 38) and explained in more detail. A further copy of the figure is listed in Appendix 5 (p.276) to support continued references throughout the thesis.

FIGURE 6 THE SYSTEM THEORY FRAMEWORK (STF)



Source: The System Theory Framework (Patton, 2006, p.5)

Figure 6 (p.38) summarises the theory's ontological explanation of the nature of change in the social world. This change is described as a series of socially constructed recursive, or feedback, mechanisms operating through time within environmental, organisational and individual open systems, all shaping change. The author's definition of an open system is as follows:

An open system is subject to influence from outside and may also influence that which is beyond its boundaries. Such interaction is termed recursiveness in the System Theory Framework and in diagrammatic form is depicted by broken lines that represent the permeability of the boundaries of each system (Patton, 2006, p.5).

Drawing on the Hollis Matrix, the theory can be situated on the understanding side between the actor and games quadrants, in which reality is deemed to be socially constructed. Note the theory is also used extensively in this research, contributing significantly in the development of its own substantive theory.

Returning to the international study in question, the authors made use of both survey and interview data (12 to 13 interviews with older women per country) to elucidate on the labour market positions of older women, across nine different countries. Bimrose's chapter, focusing on England, drew on LFS data and wider reports, already presented in this chapter, to explain the labour market positions of England's older women. Her chapter explained how England's pre-existing gendered horizontal and vertical occupational sector patterning concentrated older women's paid work in public sector employment. At the time, the Government's austerity measures involved significant financial cuts to the same sector, disproportionately impacting on older women's employment, and the care services they relied on to work. At the same time, Bimrose's transcript data provided evidence of participants experiencing many past personal transitions, for example becoming mothers, getting married,

experiencing divorce and widowhood. Her data also revealed a range of influences shaping her participants' career development, listing them as follows: intrapersonal influences that included varying levels of confidence and beliefs about work discrimination; work influences with instances of discrimination and frequent job changes; financial influences associated with anxiety about the future; and social influences such as family networks. However, it had been the aggregation of findings across all nine countries that revealed the existence of embedded systemic disadvantages across all nine nations' national policy decisions, cultural traditions and workplace cultures. Moreover, these disadvantages were found to aggregate over the women's life spans with the result that many would be facing financial hardships in later life.

To summarise, these three studies revealed the complexity of context in shaping older women's work. Context is described as follows: the intersections of both market and domestic contexts that are shaped by wider influences; three faces of context resulting in generational epochs; and recursive open systems in multi-layered and multi-dimensional structures with embedded gendered system disadvantages. However, it is worth noting that only Bimrose and colleagues (2015) combine survey data with interview data to understand and explain the nature of contextual complexity.

It is also interesting to note that Cohen and Duberly (2015) and McMahon, Watson and Bimrose (2015) describe their interview data as 'stories'. Drawing on the Hollis Matrix, stories acknowledge an actor's internal complexity whilst operating in a socially constructed reality. A second reference to interview data as stories is made by Blustein who is invited by Bimrose et al. (2015 pp. 219- 231) to comment on their study's findings. Blustein makes the following comment about stories:

The women who participated in the interviews clearly had a story to tell, one that is not easily conveyed by large scale quantitative studies or macro-level public policy analyses. The stories also provided a vivid example about how work and non-work life experiences weave in and out of each other in a seamless way evoking complex causal pathways that are hard to capture in theoretical statements (Blustein, 2015, p.255).

Furthermore, in drawing on nine countries quantitative data (surveys), qualitative data (interview stories) and the System Theory Framework Theory, Bimrose and colleagues (2015) were able to explain how subjective career (intrapersonal recursions of norms, beliefs and values) were able to influence agentic decisions about objective career (identified by visible and measurable markers of income, promotion and position). Moreover, how subjective and objective career recursions were shaped in a wider context of labour market structural disadvantage and experiences of discrimination (Bimrose et al., pp. 255-256). To this extent, the study can be situated at the centre of the Hollis Matrix with women's stories being constituted within structural disadvantage. In situating the study at such an ontological intersection, Bimrose (2015) is able to argue that careers practitioners (intermediaries) should be both challenging structural disadvantage as well as working with individual clients.

Interestingly, all three studies raise awareness of how various influences can shape change through time, in different ways. Loretto and Vickerstaff (2015) reference time as movement into retirement¹² and the influence of long running factors, whereas Cohen and Duberly's (2015) describe generation epoch shifts. Bimrose and colleagues (2015), drawing on the STF, identified how recursive influences situated

¹² Loretto and Vickerstaff (2012), also note the meaning of retirement was different for women as a result of labour divisions across domestic and market context.

within the past (time system) were able to influence the present; these influences were found to aggregate over the life span.

2.3.3 Rethinking work in austerity and the absence of resistance to change

Evidence presented so far, suggests that during austerity UK older women were transitioning from public sector jobs into either economic inactivity or various forms of flexible work. Feminist scholars, Richardson and Schaeffer (2013), and Rubery (2014), rethink women's relationship to employment and, in so doing, offer insights into why there had been so little resistance to these changes.

Richardson and Schaeffer (2013) drew on the epistemologies of social constructionism and discourse theory to unpack the gender loaded nature of language around work. As a result, they go on to recommend that 'career' and 'job' be reconceptualised within a dual discourse of 'market and unpaid care' to facilitate an equal gender distribution across all work. Only in this way, they claim, would it be possible to challenge the low pay associated with women's market care work and, subsequently, address the crisis in care across ageing western societies. In addition, they noted the tendency of policy to focus on 'adult worker' exacerbating the problem of breadwinner/caregiver distributions by rendering care work invisible. Furthermore, they warned that such policies might give rise to a bifurcation in the labour market: a primary group in full-time, better paid, longer hours work (men), and a secondary group located in part-time, casual, seasonal, low-paid level work also delivering care (women)¹³. Richardson and Schaeffer's insights into the power of gender loaded language and discourse may go some way to explaining UK older

¹³ See also Bennett and Mohring (2015) typologies of organisational insiders and outsiders and the influence of social norms.

women's acceptance of lower quality work. Drawing on their insights, this thesis extends its meaning of work to also encompass unpaid work.

Rubery's (2014) explanation of why there was so little resistance to austerity, is embedded in her call for policy to recognise gender relations as an institution in its own right - alongside employment and welfare institutions. She explains her case by examining the nature of gender relations within four contexts: history and the development of gender and economic policy regimes; the origins of the 2008 financial crisis; emergence of the sovereign debt crisis; and the debt crisis in the UK's electoral context. Rubery's first two contexts reveal the development of entwined economic and gender policy regimes (Southern European, Eastern Europe, Nordic and Neo-Liberal – UK and USA) that go some way to explaining gender variation in national experiences of recession. For example, in the UK the previous decade's regime of policies resulted in an increasing number of women entering higher education, a rise in 'dual earner' families, access to parental leave for childcare, increasing numbers of children born outside of marriage, reductions in fertility and 'convergence' towards integration of women into waged employment – all supported by welfare services. Rubery suggests the UK's austerity programme required an additional economic adjustment mechanism: the withdrawal of women from public sector work, constructing them as a flexible reserve army of labour (Bruegel, 1979 cited in Rubery, 2013, p.20) with profound implications for the women themselves.

In the third context, Rubery (2014) describes the 2007-08 recession as a two-wave recession. The first wave being the financial crash that adversely affected financial, property, construction and manufacturing sectors - a male dominated recession. The second wave of recession (fourth context) being induced by the prolonged austerity drive that shifted the burden of sovereign debt on to the public sector - a female recession. Rubery (2014) suggests Government overcame resistance to austerity by

taking advantage of latent ideologies and deploying ‘conversion’ and ‘displacement’ policy tactics (Streeck, 2005, cited in Rubery, 2013, p.27). Examples of these adjustments were the Government’s use of latent ideology associated with the idea of public sector worker profligacy, overpaid bureaucrats and an unproductive workforce. Thus, latent ideology shifted the discourse from blaming the financial sector for the UK’s sovereign debt to public sector worker profligacy.

Rubery (2014) argues the consequences for women have been a ‘conversion’ in the status of their jobs from high to low social value and ‘conversion’ of public care services into unpaid family services. Conversion has also been deployed in the promotion of cost (associated with the ideology of austerity) over quality and this had resulted in changing the ‘standard for employment,’ from public sector job to private sector flexible types of work. Thereby providing a rationale for the displacement of public sector jobs with the private sector and flexible types of work. Rubery’s study has sensitised the thesis to any traces of latent ideology and or conversion and displacement discourses involved in rationalising older women’s displacements into domestic unpaid care work and low-quality paid employment.

2.3.4 Summary

In summary, studies capable of being situated on the Hollis Matrix explain side deployed “detective work” (Trade Union Congress, 2014) to reveal how significant numbers of UK older women were, and continued to be, in work transition during austerity. These studies suggested that UK older women were moving out of public sector quality jobs and into flexible forms of work, possibly via agencies (Coulter, 2016, p. 2014; Cribb 2014, p.22; Fawcett Society, 2014). The literature also noted the existence of Jobcentre Plus but none of the studies addressed the doctoral thesis research question.

Literature situated on the understanding side of the Hollis Matrix offered further insights into the prevalence of domestic and care work in women's past and present working lives (Bimrose, McMahon and Watson, 2015; Cohen, 2015; Loretto; Vickerstaff, 2012). Bimrose and colleagues (2015) offered a theoretical explanation of how context can shape older women's relationship to work, and the implications of their findings for careers professionals. In addition, literature rethinking women and their work led the doctoral thesis into adopting the conceptualisation of work as 'market and unpaid care', as well as sensitising it to latent ideologies and conversion and displacement strategies (Rubery, 2014). However, despite reviewing studies across this literature search area there were no answers to the research question posed in this doctoral thesis.

2.4 TRANSITION IN WORK

Evidence from 'transition in work' literature falls into those investigating job loss to (un)employment and those that reconceptualise the nature of transition. Job loss to (un)employment evidence tends to be situated on the Hollis Matrix explain side and focuses on the concept of 'adult worker' as a unit of analysis. The literature reconceptualising transition tends to be situated on the understand side of the Hollis Matrix. This literature presents more nuanced accounts of transition from more varied sub-populations: older women, mid-career workers and professional worker transitions. Each of these types of study is considered in the following subsections, starting with job loss to (un)employment studies.

2.4.1 Job loss to (un)employment

Studies examining experiences of job loss to (un)employment can be found in a range of subject areas, although tending to concentrate in psychology, vocational

psychology, organisational studies and, more recently, policy literature. Much of the evidence is clustered in the upper quadrants of agent or actor. Consequently, the evidence tends to focus on investigating the capacities of individuals to explain or understand work transition outcomes.

Hollis Matrix explain side studies, focusing on job loss to (un)employment, adopted similar data collection methods: collection of survey data, statistical analysis of primary and secondary data and development of statistical models to predict factors influencing employment outcomes. The following four illustrative examples start with explaining how unemployment is experienced, then move on to how behaviours are associated with transition that can impact on job search activity and reemployment outcomes. More importantly, they evidence the complexity of these experiences both within and between different populations.

First, Solove, Fisher and Kraiger's (2014) study involved a two-wave online survey (3 months apart) of 123 American unemployed respondents, all identified from LinkedIn and Meetup.com. Results of the study were presented as a linear model revealing a direct effect of coping resources (self-esteem, social support and to some extent financial resources) on coping strategies, and a direct effect of problem focused coping on reemployment three months later. The study concluded that individuals with higher levels of self-esteem and social support were more likely to engage in problem-focused coping than emotional coping, and this resulted in a greater likelihood of being re-employed three months later. A second study from Lim, Chen, Sherry and MingZe (2016) analysed the results of a two-wave survey (one year apart) of 89 unemployed Singapore respondents drawn from a Singapore recruitment agency database. Their model found that financial difficulties and social exclusion were associated with job search fatigue whilst psychological capital (hope, optimism, resilience and self-efficacy) reduced job search fatigue. The model confirmed a statistical association between job search fatigue and lower

reemployment quality and later organisational commitment. These studies would suggest that positive re-employment outcomes are strongly determined by the support provided during job seeking,

Klehe, Zikic, Van Vianen and De Pater (2011) provide a third example, investigating the career adaptive behaviour of 350 employees, in the context of organisational restructuring. Their study consisted of a two-wave questionnaire being sent out one-month before a layoff announcement and then five months after the announcement. To operationalise¹⁴ the concept of career adaptive behaviour, they subdivided it into career planning and career exploration. Their results demonstrated that career planning positively predicted employee loyalty to the organisation five months later. Career exploration, however, negatively predicted loyalty and positively predicted employee exit reactions.

Finally, Vansteenkiste and colleagues (2013) analysed 1,840 responses from Belgian unemployed adults to an online survey, conducted in 2010. The survey explored whether psychological mobility stimulated or constrained unemployed job seekers search successes. The variable of psychological mobility was operationalised as a 9-item scale, according to degrees of willingness to accept a job combined with job-seeking attitudes. Their statistical model identified an association between psychological mobility and time spent looking for jobs, levels of job search intensity and numbers of job interviews. Associations were found between psychological mobility and job search intensity and numbers of interviews. Interestingly, no straightforward association could be found between psychological mobility and final reemployment outcomes. The authors suggest that psychological mobility cannot be

¹⁴ To operationalise, in this context, means the process by which (abstract) concepts are translated into (measurable) variables.

used to explain reemployment outcomes because there is too much variation across sub-populations and contexts.

These studies provide a grounding for concepts of psychological mobility, job search fatigue, coping resources, problem-focused strategies and career adaptability behaviour on work transition. Their models, however, need to be treated with caution. Firstly, they tend to rely on gender-neutral headcounts and, therefore, cannot confirm whether their findings are transferrable to older women's experiences of work transition. Secondly, as Vansteenkiste and colleagues (2013) advise, their generalised models cannot explain sub-population behaviours in unique contexts. An example of one such sub-population exception being UK older women's transition experiences during austerity. Thirdly, the models tend to assume that the quality of transition is dependent on the capacities and resources of an individual. The limits of such simple causal explanations, however, risk missing additional contextual influences. Fourthly, it is worth noting that Lim and colleagues (2016) draw their sample of respondents from a recruitment agency database, whilst Solove and colleagues (2014) use LinkedIn and Meetup (online intermediaries). Agencies and online job search tools are all examples of intermediaries, yet none of the authors acknowledged their influence on transition. Finally, the studies take no account of the demands of unpaid care work on transition in paid work, for example the demands of domestic care work on levels of job search fatigue.

The Hollis Matrix understanding side evidence is derived from studies that investigate how individuals experience transition from job loss to unemployment. These studies also tend to follow a similar data collection pattern: a small number of participants are asked to recall experiences of past transitions, and their retrospective data is analysed to understand their experiences. Relevant studies can

be grouped into UK older women, mid-career worker and professional worker evidence.

Recent evidence focusing on UK older women is derived from three recent studies, two of which arise from the same authors that were published at different times. Bimrose, McMahon and Watson's (2015) international study, particularly Bimrose's (2015) Chapter on England, is presented again because it can be situated on both sides of the Hollis Matrix. To summarise their main point: gendered systemic disadvantages embedded in UK labour market structure have and continue to be exacerbated by austerity measures which, it can be suggested, has resulted in a significant number of England's older women in work transition. Bimrose's evidence, derived from 12 older women from England, suggests less tangible subjective career, incorporating cultural influences and values around meeting family needs, can recursively influence agentic decision making. Although, unlike this doctoral thesis, the women interviewed by Bimrose (2015) were reflecting on past career developments and not current transition(s) whilst being in transition(s).

The second study started in 1993-1994, when Cohen (2014), interviewed 17 women about their transitions into self-employment. Twelve of these participants were followed up in 2010, at the start of austerity. Initial findings suggested three influences on transition: varying degrees of self-employment awareness; organisational and domestic influences; and proactive, reactive or adaptive modes of engagement with self-employment. In the follow up interviews, four findings were particularly relevant to understanding participants' transition(s). First, the influence of changing contextual dynamics: information technology; changes to sector specific regulations and increased managerialism; personal contextual dynamics that included instances of illness; and external attitudes towards women in work. The second set of influences were changes to occupational identity and commitment to occupation, sometimes as a result of changing domestic roles, or the

influence of money. A third influence was the breakdown in the boundary between work and retirement; and the fourth was the influence of 'important others' some of whom were classified as intermediaries.

By combining findings with wider theoretical work, Cohen was able to present a new concept: the career imagination. The wider theoretical work referenced included: Mintzberg's (1987) potter's wheel metaphor; Geertz's (1973) metaphor of webs and webs of significance; and Barley and Tolbert's (1997) reference to career as interpretive schemas of resources and constraining and enabling norms. Cohen sets boundaries on these theoretical resources by placing them in the wider work of Bourdieu's Field Theory (Bourdieu, 1977). Key concepts associated with the theory include the 'field' described as organisations, occupations, sector or self-employment all acting as boundaried sites. Players then assume positions associated with rules of performance and capital acts that are both assets and combinations of assets acquired by players, according to field rules (macro and micro rules). Finally, habitus is described as predispositions or tendencies that result in people in a field, acting in a particular way as a result of scripts. Her theoretical work can be situated on the understanding side of the Hollis Matrix in which participants are situated in the actor quadrant interacting in context that operate as games.

Further evidence is presented in a study using a deductive¹⁵ approach to develop an in-depth understanding of the concept of career adaptability, derived from the Life Designing Paradigm (Savickas et al, 2009)¹⁶, and undertaken by McMahon, Watson

¹⁵ Deduction: This involves a particular form of abstract reasoning which involves moving from a set of given premises, to an established theoretical starting point, to a logical conclusion. See Smith, M.J. (2003) *Social Science in Question*. London: Open University, SAGE Publications Ltd.

¹⁶ An account of the Life Design Paradigm is provided in the next section headed Transition Reconceptualised.

and Bimrose (2012). In the study, McMahon and colleagues analyse the transition stories of 36 older women from across England, Australia and South Africa in order to develop a deeper qualitative understanding of career adapt-abilities scale measures, presented in Appendix 6, (p.277). They then go on to construct country specific case study material from their interview data and then draw from the material to verify the concept's three levels of recursive interplay (external, internal and reflexive) and recursions¹⁷ between their five dimensions of concern, control, curiosity, confidence and cooperation for this career adapt-abilities concept. Although no references were made to the influence of intermediaries on transition, in the study it is assumed its purpose was to inform career practitioners (intermediaries).

To sum up so far, these studies contribute three relevant findings: firstly, women's transitions cannot be reduced to simple, gender neutral, linear statistical models that predict job seeking outcomes on the basis of personal capacities. Secondly, England's older women were likely to be in transition and their agency could have been recursively shaped by their subjective career, operating in a gendered labour market structure, whilst being influenced by austerity. Similarly, Cohen's concept of career imagination arises from wider theoretical work and suggests women's pre-enabled cognition might constrain agency even before it is tested out in Bourdieu's field. Thirdly, McMahon, Watson and Bimrose's (2012) deductive study unpicks the concept of career adaptability in the stories of older women (these include stories used in their 2015 study) and maps their findings onto concepts already presented in the Life Design Paradigm, outlined later.

17. McMahon, Watson and Bimrose's (2012) draw on the term "recursive" on pages 765 and 768 but offer no definition for the term.

Moving on to evidence focusing on mid-career, two recent studies revealed that lifelong learning and capacity to construct positive narratives about career are key contributors to career development and job security. The first study is presented by Brown, Bimrose, Barnes and Hughes (2012) and draws on interview data from 64 high skilled, mid-career adults from across England and Norway. Their results identify four dimensions of learning that contribute to worker's career adaptabilities. These learning dimensions are an opportunity to access more challenging work; opportunity to update job-related substantive knowledge; learning through interactions; and developing capacities of self-direction and self-reflexivity (includes narratability).

The importance of lifelong learning, in supporting transition, is further substantiated in the findings of a second larger study published by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Education or CEDEFOP (2014). Interviews with 25 people from each of the countries of Denmark, Germany, Spain, France and Italy all focus on the role of lifelong learning in stories of past transitions and those anticipated in the future. Findings confirm the inter-relationship between agency, structural constraint and opportunity constraint (also confirmed by Bimrose and colleagues (2015), Cohen (2014) and Blustein (2013)). Biographies from the study suggest that individuals need the support of lifelong learning across three interacting representation and these representations need to be addressed by careers practitioners (intermediaries) in guidance interviews. The following Table 8 (p.53) provides a summary of these representations:

TABLE 8 KEY INTERSECTING REPRESENTATIONS FOR LEARNING

Representation 1 Learning as a process of identity development – learning as becoming	Representation 2 Learning and identity development across four domains	Representation 3 Learning in opportunity structures within which individuals operate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic career and learning biographies; • self –understanding; • sense of personal agency; • personality; • motivation; • resilience; • self-efficacy; • commitment to own learning; • professional development; and • career adaptability. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relational development: Interactions at work; learning from others; socialisation; and identity work. 2. Cognitive development: knowledge base; technical updating; and critical thinking. 3. Practical development: on the job, changing work; ways of thinking and practising; and critical reflection. 4. Emotional development through engagement; self-understanding; understanding the perspective of other; reflexiveness; feelings; and mind-set. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment and unemployment rates; • Institutional Vocational Education (IVET); • Occupational structure (Beruf); transition regimes; occupational pathways; and • Continuous Vocational Education and Training (CVET). • Progression to and permeability with higher education from VET; • affordance for learning and interaction at work; and • support structures (e.g. family, personal networks, public employment services) and career guidance.

Source: CEDEFOP (2014, p.48) summarised by the author

It is also worth noting that interviewees, in the CEDEFOP study, were younger than participants in this research. However, the relevance of these findings relates to the importance of on-going lifelong learning across the three representations, and the importance of on-going career narratability, to buffer against future career shocks.

Studies investigating professionals undergoing work transition can be found across vocational psychology, management and organisation subjects. However, two are particularly relevant because they focus on professional worker in transition during economic crisis (paralleling UK graduate women exiting public sector work during austerity). Gabriel, Gray and Goregaokar's (2013) research involved interviews with 12 unemployed British managers, only one of which was female. The managers were

in their 50's and in transition during the 2008 financial crisis. The study describes their exits as either a rise up the career ladder and then being laid off, or as itinerant professionals whose next job failed to arrive and subsequent exit from their information technology work. A number of the participants' exit stories consisted of being long drawn out processes of tension and conflict whilst for others the story was of shock and a sense of management betrayal. Although the authors make no claim to exit types influencing transition, the Blustein, Kozan and Connors-Kellgren (2013) study, that follows, would suggest they can.

Blustein and colleague's (2013) interviews with unemployed people (not all were professionals), attending a USA One Stop Career Shop, found those participants able to predict being unemployed before exit were better able to cope with transition. Employees caught off guard, conversely, were found to divert energy and resources to overcome the initial emotional shock (see also Lim et al. 2016). Interestingly, neither Gabriel and colleagues (2013), nor Blustein and colleagues (2013) make any reference to the influence of intermediaries on exit types or resulting transition outcomes.

Gabriel and colleagues (2013) findings also reveal the influence of three types of narrative coping on participant transitions. The first type is described as temporary derailment and is characterised by a future viewed as a recommencement of previous career after intensive job search. The second type is job loss as the end of career viewed, in some instances, as a product of injustice. The authors found this type of narrative tended to result in participants struggling to find solace from the event and ascribing the occurrence to personal failure or the cruelty of others. The third type of influence was constructed as a radical end to career trajectories, although not a negative end. The influence of this narrative was displacement of reasons for the experience on to social or uncontrollable factors, and the view that unemployment might potentially introduce a new start.

The study's conclusions draw on 'narrative coping' to demonstrate the way in which each of their participants struggled to construct a story that offered both meaning and consolation. Those participants describing despair tended to include stories of career closure. In contrast, those with a more open-ended narrative were better able to contain emotions by believing unemployment was temporary or giving up the idea of their career as it was and moving on to new careers or a 'bricolage'¹⁸ of options. The authors describe these latter stories as constructing a moratorium or quest type of identity. Interestingly, the authors also acknowledge that further research is needed to account for how narratives about gender, family circumstances and financial hardship are capable of influencing professional work transitions. They make no reference to the influence of intermediaries on narratives that in turn might go towards influencing transition and transition outcomes.

The influence of strength of professional identity on transition is revealed in a study conducted by Simosi, Rousseau and Daskalaki's (2015), and is particularly relevant in being conducted during a time of economic crisis (specifically the Greek employment crisis). Adopting a version of grounded theory, they conducted interviews two years apart, initially with 29 young unemployed professionals (aged 24-31), followed by 12 interviews in the second wave. Available career options for the young professionals were, at the time, described as a bricolage of short-term work and volunteer activities (similar to the flexible types of work available in the UK). The study confirmed six propositions relating to the influence of professional identity on transition: firstly, strength of professional identity can influence the career behaviour of new entrants in crisis conditions; secondly, strong professional identities tended to become broader in crisis conditions; thirdly, activities related to a profession can reinforce the pursuit of a career in that profession whilst unrelated

¹⁸ Bricolage is a term used by Gabriel et al. (2013) and Simosi et al. (2015) and represents the sewing together of flexible types of paid and unpaid work.

activities can create the contrary; fourthly, strength of professional identity was positively related to the degree of elaboration in employment schemas regarding future employment; fifthly, they found individual future outlooks could influence career related goals and sixthly, career related goals were able to shape an individual's future outlook.

To sum up, much of the job loss to (un)employment literature can be situated in the actor/agent quadrants of the Hollis Matrix, and, generally, consider how individuals need to change, for example becoming more adaptable or developing more positive coping narratives. Interestingly, Gabriel and colleagues (2013) and Simosi and colleagues (2015) draw on the term 'bricolage' to describe the way in which their participants had needed to sew together different bits and pieces of unpaid work and flexible work, although neither authors include domestic unpaid work in their versions of bricolage. Furthermore, none of the literatures refer to intermediary influence, although Gabriel and colleagues (2013) have participants who describe the Jobcentre Plus (an intermediary) as, "a soul-destroying place" (2010, p.23).

2.4.2 Reconceptualising transition

A number of studies have reconceptualised the concept of transition from job loss to (un)employment to describe shifts in risk and responsibilities, career pathways that cross an ever-fading line between work and retirement and more abstract transitions in employment status. Evidence is presented from each of these reconceptualisations, starting with shifts in risks and responsibilities.

Swanson's (2013) history of career theories differentiates between traditional theories based on breadwinner careers¹⁹ (Super, 1981; Holland, 1959), and new

¹⁹ Referenced earlier by Sennett in his description of the US Ford Automotive worker.

theories aimed at helping workers adapt to the demands of flexible work. She claims the new theories are more holistic by considering personal lives and relationships (Richardson, 2012, 2013; Blustein, 2011), however by far the most ambitious theory is the Life Designing Paradigm that claims to present a global career theory for a globalised world (Savickas et al., 2009).

The Life Designing Paradigm suggests we are living in a new world that has better information technology, new employer and employee relationships and presents workers with less definable jobs or predictable job transitions. As a consequence, the theory calls for five changes: a move from trait and state to context-focused support (information for intermediaries); the end of prescriptions and a shift to process; a change from the idea of transition being linear and causal to nonlinear and dynamic; from scientific fact to becoming narrative analysis; and from descriptions to modelling fractal patterns that can predict emerging configurations of variables. Their resulting framework for careers counselling practice (intermediaries) rests on being preventative, holistic, contextual and supporting lifelong goals for developing client capacities of adaptability, narratability and being active and intentional. Underpinning the theory are assumptions that responsibility for risks, associated with the new flexible world, should lie with the client.

On the other hand, Schmid (1995) drawing on the analytical framework of Transition Labour Market Theory would argue that such risks and securities are embedded and shaped in the structural links between the institutions of state, family and market. The theory concentrates on critical transitions across the life course: transitions in relation to work and education; family formation; spells of unemployment and non-employment; retirement; and transitions within paid employment. The theory presents the case that all transitions construct risks that need to be mitigated with security: just as work must pay so too must transitions. The theory suggests that responsibility for security needs to be managed across all three institutions of family,

state and market and, more importantly, deployed as prevention, mitigation or coping strategies.

Drawing on the theory, Schmid (2015) argues for a system of public employment insurance and state funded lifelong learning to mitigate transition risk. His reasons for a public employment insurance system are that only the state has sufficient liquidity to handle the risk of mass unemployment, and only the state can enforce compulsory membership to ensure low risk members cover high-risk occupations and entrepreneurship. He then goes on to present five arguments for state funded lifelong learning provision: firstly, it overcomes the problem of workers with the greatest need being least likely to afford education and training, for example in the situation of young people; secondly, it addresses the problem of small and medium-sized firms not having enough saved to invest in the employability of their staff; thirdly, it overcomes the problem of firm-specific and sector-specific investment in lifelong learning that restricts wider firm or sector transitions; fourthly, it extends expectation horizons for workers (for example older workers concerned about return on investment); and finally, state funded lifelong learning overcomes information uncertainties for both labour supply and demand, thus preventing a cycle of uncertainties begetting uncertainties at both micro and macro levels. Conversely, Gazier and Gaute (2011) find fault with the theory in that it assumes worker mobility is necessary and, therefore, switches attention from the debate on the rights of workers to have stable and sustainable jobs. Furthermore, the theory advocates sharing work hours more equitably, but such an action does not add wealth or income. Finally, it is argued that the theory is conceptually constrained by its wholesale acceptance of the model of market and development of market, thereby excluding any other system.

More recent studies have suggested that new career pathways are being constructed that cross an ever-fading line between work and retirement. Until now, work

transition has been conceptualised as an event or recursive change, but Duberly and Carmichael's (2016) study suggests UK older women are on pre-constructed pathways that cross this fading line. Findings from their occupational history calendars and in-depth interviews with 28 women, aged 55-76, reveal previous career history patterns that mirror subsequent retirement outcomes. Their study reveals clusters of women's pathways that do not lead to retirement, including:

- cluster one - professional workers (aged 56-75);
- cluster two - portfolio workers (aged 56-76);
- cluster three - carer to career (aged 55-59);
- cluster four - fragmented career (aged 56-71); and
- cluster five - late professional (aged 55-64).

Their findings show that each cluster pattern's career trajectory is associated with a different mode of retirement that is characterised as enabled, constrained or vulnerable. Cluster one was described as enabled because it was financially secure and afforded choices of continuing in employment, taking up exciting projects and/or taking up leisure activities. Cluster four was characterised as constrained because it had high levels of dependency and career decisions were driven by the needs of families. Retirement for these women was marked by a focus on domestic labour or working part-time in order to supplement low pension incomes. The vulnerable group was associated with clusters two, three and five and were described as having non-traditional career pathways. They were labeled as vulnerable because their pension provisions were limited, and they were also experiencing, or had experienced, one or all of the following: ill health, divorce and they did not own a property. The choices available for this group included continuing to work or being reliant on benefits. Surprisingly, Duberley and Carmichael (2016) found that within the cluster labeled vulnerable were professional women who had made a late entrance into their careers, and, consequently, lacked sufficient pension capital to fund their retirement. The limitation of Duberly and Carmichael's (2016) study lies in the fact that it can only

present data from a small sample of participants, but it does indicate pathways from cluster patterns of work to enabled, constrained or vulnerable outcomes.

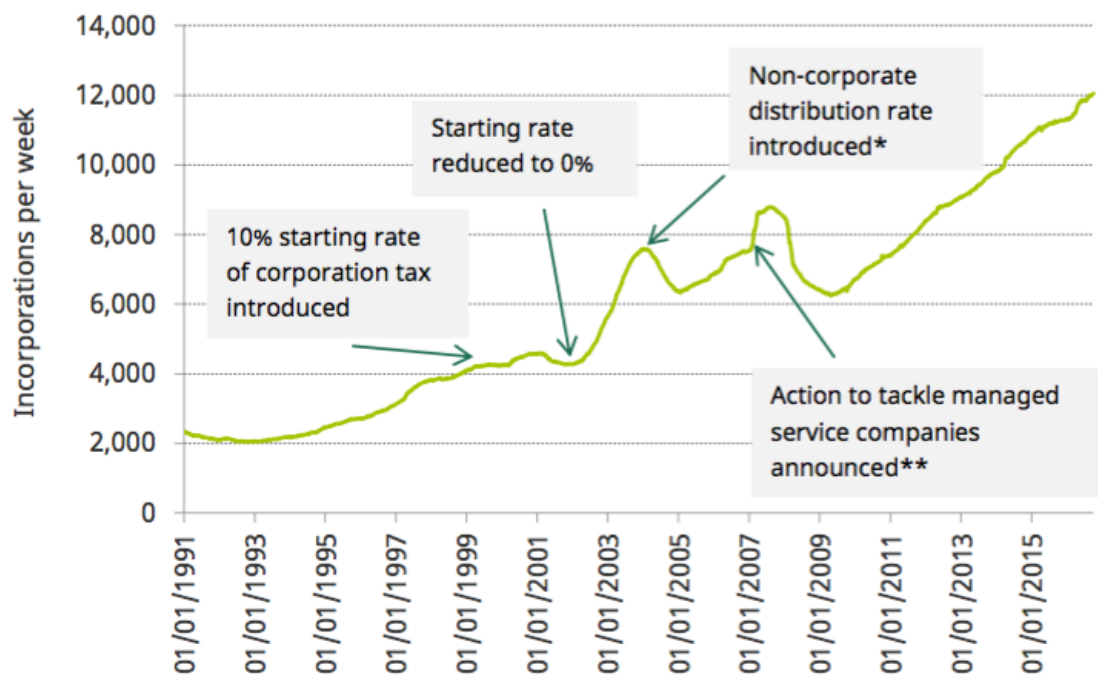
More recently, policy literature has revealed transition reconceptualised in more abstract terms: in the form of changing employment status. In April 2017, the same month as the final interview conducted for this research, the Government's Social Security (Miscellaneous Amendments No.2) Regulation 2017, or IR35 for the public sector, came into force. The Explanatory Memorandum for IR35 explained that the purpose of the instrument was to ensure fairness in the tax system by preventing personal service companies, an example of an abstract intermediary, from sidestepping tax and national insurance contributions. The need for such a regulation would suggest public sector organisations were employing increasing numbers of these personal service companies, warranting such a regulation.

Emerging policy literature, at the time of IR35, offers a number of insights into why the Government needed to introduce IR35 for the public sector. Adam, Miller and Pope's (2017) analysis of different tax, national insurance contributions and employment protection treatments of employment status is summarised in their Table and presented in Appendix 3 (p.273). The Table reveals the financial savings to be made by organisations, including public sector organisations, when recruiting workers on more flexible contracts: not having to pay minimum wage, holiday pay or national insurance contributions. Low income earners, however, give up their rights to the minimum wage, statutory sick pay, holiday pay, national insurance contributions and protection from unfair dismissal.

Further analysis by Adam and colleagues (2017) showed a continuous rise in the numbers of incorporations (flexible contracts including various intermediary shells) from January 2011 to beyond January 2015: a time when the UK Government had

been reducing its spending on the public sector. Their graph, depicted as Figure 7 below, summarises their analysis of how various policy changes subtly changed the upwards trajectory for numbers of incorporations. Unfortunately, the graph does not demarcate change across different sectors.

FIGURE 7 INCORPORATIONS PER WEEK SINCE 1991 (52 WEEK MOVING AVERAGE)



* This effectively marked the end of the tax advantage of the starting rate for most company owner-managers. See footnote 15.

** For more details on the response of incorporations to this measure, see C. Crawford and J. Freedman, 'Small business taxation', in S. Adam, T. Besley, R. Blundell, S. Bond, R. Chote, M. Gammie, P. Johnson, G. Myles and J. Poterba (eds), *Dimensions of Tax Design: The Mirrlees Review*, Oxford University Press for IFS, Oxford, 2010, <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/7184>.

Source: Correspondence with Companies House.

Source: Adam, Miller and Pope (2017, p.23)

Briefly, policy literature published in the same year, noted issues with organisations adopting such flexible business practices. For example, the Taylor Review (Taylor, March, Nicol and Broadbent, 2017) noted the following issues: firstly, concerns

about the growing imbalance of power between employers and workers; secondly, the growing one sided levels of flexibility allowing employers to pick and choose hours - leading to general income insecurity for those on low incomes; thirdly, loss of continuous service impacting on employment rights and pensions; fourthly, the potential compromise in access to training and development along with career progression; fifthly, issues regarding the general enforcement landscape – for example the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate (EASI) had not covered agency outsourced services such as worker payments via umbrella companies. A further concern was the prohibitive cost of taking general employment issues to an employment tribunal. Sixthly, a lack of clarity regarding employment status: employee, a worker, or genuinely self-employed status. The review found evidence of tensions across legal frameworks creating perverse incentives for businesses to adopt different business models, for the purposes of commercial advantage, that were particularly disadvantageous for low income earners. The review went on to make several recommendations that included clarity on the line between worker and self-employed status and advantages to be gained from adopting types of different casual business models.

Reconceptualising transition studies, therefore, are similar in acknowledging uncertainties created by the new world of flexible work. Different perspectives include the Life Designing Paradigm that places responsibility for managing transition uncertainty with the individual; Transition Labour Market Theory that sees a transition of risk that needs to be secured across family, market and state; and Duberly and Carmichael (2016) and, to some extent, Bimrose and colleagues (2015) who suggest that some UK older graduate level women are on transition ‘pathways’ - either recursive or pre-constructed to becoming vulnerable. Meanwhile, emerging literature presents evidence pointing to the potential detrimental effects of changing employment status and this theme is continued in the next section examining literature on intermediaries.

2.4.3 Summary

To sum up, transition studies situated on the explanation side of the Hollis Matrix seem to have limited relevance to the experiences of UK older women in transition. They tend to present gender-neutral statistical models predicated on the breadwinner models of work that renders older women's transition experiences invisible. In contrast, findings arising from studies situated on the Hollis Matrix understanding side highlight the complexity of older women's transitions over the life course. Such complexities include the intertwinings of past broken careers (paid and unpaid care) and personal and social transitions (Bimrose, 2015; Cohen, 2014; Duberly and Carmichael, 2016). In the context of current UK austerity, both Bimrose (2015) and Duberly and Carmichael (2015) warn that many UK women may find themselves unable to fund their future retirement as a result of past broken careers. Only Cohen's study references intermediary influence, but this is limited to influence on a group of participants she interviewed in 1993-94 and then re-interviewed 12 years later, in 2010. The difference between Cohen's study and this thesis is that her participants were reflecting back, from 2010 to 1993/4, whereas this doctoral thesis focuses on understanding the influences of intermediaries whilst the participants are in transition, over a shorter period of time (approximately 6 months) and in the midst of austerity.

Literature investigating professional worker transitions (Gabriel et al., 2013; Simosi et al., 2015) and mid-career transitions suggest job exit experience can influence narrative coping. Furthermore, strength of professional identity and types of available opportunities (although not specifically confirmed for older female professionals) can also influence transition outcomes. Interestingly, both studies also introduce the concept of 'bricolage' patterns of work: sewing together bits and pieces of types of work to create sufficient paid hours. Neither sets of studies reference the influence of intermediaries, although Gabriel and colleagues (2013) participants had described engagement with Jobcentre Plus. Interestingly, studies

focusing on mid-career workers indicate the range of support that should be in place to ensure mid-career workers remain in employment, or at least stand a chance of re-employment when in transition (Brown et al., 2012). What is not known is the extent to which such support is available (access to past learning, learning to adjust career direction and support to narrate new career identities and directions) and its influence on transition.

Finally, theoretical work such as the Life Designing Paradigm and Transition Labour Market theory both call for reconceptualising thinking about supporting transition in the context of new flexible types of work. Interestingly, Life Designing authors (Savickas et al., 2009) make no reference to aggregated disadvantages created by care work. However, the Transition Labour Market Theory takes account of risks and securities that would need to be in place across the institutions of family, state and market to cover care work. Duberly and Carmichael's (2016) study reinforces the story of life course aggregated risks and draws attention to the way many older women's career trajectories are currently constructed as pathways to becoming constrained or vulnerable in older age. Meanwhile, emerging policy literature presents more abstract transitions across various employment status. The evidence points to rising numbers of incorporations (flexible contracts), offering organisations the opportunity to save money whilst disadvantaging those on low incomes.

2.5 INTERMEDIARIES

Relevant themes emerging from literature about intermediaries include the following: firstly, the lack of a universally agreed definition of the term; secondly, the elastic nature of the concept; thirdly, the invisibility of intermediaries – possibly linked to the first two themes; and thirdly, the variety of intermediaries operating in

the labour market, as listed in Appendix 8 (p. 279). These themes are presented in more detail below, followed by a summary of findings and the gaps in knowledge about intermediaries, addressed by this research.

2.5.1 The elastic concept of intermediary

Literature focusing on intermediaries, as well as generally being situated on the Hollis Matrix understand side, is scarce. Peck (2005) surmised the reason for the scarcity being a result of their involvement in non-standard forms of employment, as stated below.

Perhaps not surprisingly in an industry that trades in 'non- standard' employment, for many countries there are few independently verified sources of data on the staffing business and international data are extremely sparse. (Peck, 2005, p.4)

Of the literature that is available, it is clear there is no one definition of intermediary. Table 9 (p.66) offers a representative sample of four studies that demonstrate the point and provide evidence that the term is a highly elastic concept.

TABLE 9 INTERMEDIARY DEFINITIONS, FUNCTIONS AND INFLUENCES

Methodology	Definition of Intermediary	Function and Influence
Bessy and Chauvin (2013) A review of literature across economics, sociology and political science on the topic of market intermediaries.	Intermediary is used as a general term that encompasses entities with heterogeneous identities, roles and impacts. The authors go on to identify four types of for-profit intermediary: distributors, matchmakers, consultants and evaluators.	Functions of intermediaries include: distribute, match, consult and evaluate. They can influence information flows and construct valuation frames.
Enright (2013) Labour Market Intermediaries (LMI) Review of literature across labour geography	Draws on Benner's organisational structure classifications of intermediaries: for profit, membership based and public sector. In her own desk-based study she identifies temporary staffing agencies and contract brokers, executive search firms and head-hunters, and gang master as for-profit examples.	For profit intermediary functions include reducing transaction costs, shaping compensation levels, displacing risk and network building.
Bosley, Arnold and Cohen (2009) Analysis of life history data taken from 28 non- managerial employees across six UK organisations	An intermediary can be an informal career shaper. The intermediary <i>...uses or is believed to use influence to intervene with powerful gatekeepers on participants' behalf. Actions are enabled by position in relation to social structure.</i> (2009, p.1511)	Intermediaries encourage reflection on career self-concept, access to opportunities affecting world view and play an indirect part in shaping career direction and career action in pursuit of a career self-concept.
Cohen (2014) A review of semi-structured interviews gathered from 17 women in 1993/4 moving into self-employment who were re-interviewed in 2010.	Intermediaries can play more of a back-stage role that is make introductions to key people with access to contracts and positions. Her findings suggest on occasions there can be a fine-line between intermediaries and gatekeepers.	Intermediaries as 'important others can influence the following: career thinking and development; decisions made, and paths taken; conceptions of self in career and broader career theorising.

Source: Author

Drawing on studies arising from labour geography, Enright (2013) identified temporary staffing agencies, contract brokers, executive search firms' head-hunters and gangmasters as examples of 'for profit' labour market intermediaries. She described them as involved in reducing transaction costs, shaping compensation levels, risk displacement (particularly on to workers) and network building. These functions had all originally been identified by Benner (2002) in his investigation of

intermediaries in the supply of flexible workers to the high-tech industries of Silicon Valley, California.

Equally, Bessy and Chauvin (2013) drawing on literatures from across sociology, economics and political science, broadened the scope of intermediary in investigating their relation to information flows and valuation frames. Their study extended the for-profit function to naming their intermediary types according to function: matchmakers, evaluators, consultants and distributors. It is worth noting that Bessy and Chauvin only offered an example of labour market intermediary in their matchmaking intermediary function. Their study concluded that market intermediaries (including labour market intermediaries) had the power to be players and builders of markets because markets were imperfect. Market imperfections allowed intermediaries to take control of information flow and valuation systems that, in turn, enabled them to take control of quality, price and supply, and, therefore, the power to ensure their own profit. A copy of their model is reproduced in Appendix 7 (p.278).

Whereas Bessy and Chauvin, and Enright's studies were desk-based, Bosley, Arnold and Cohen's (2009)²⁰ empirical studies revealed intermediaries as informal career shapers. Their study involved interviews with 28 non-managerial employees about their career development. The study revealed managers, colleagues and family members all acting as informal intermediaries. These informal intermediaries were described as using position in social structure to intervene with gatekeepers to support access to opportunities. These intermediaries were found to contribute to changes in career self-concept and career world-view leading to their interviewees

²⁰ Note Cohen is also one of the colleagues in the Bosley and colleagues (2009) study and references this study in her later work (Cohen, 2014)

taking up new career directions and opportunities. Cohen's own 2014 study, of women moving from organisational jobs into self-employment, described intermediary roles ranging from performing more backstage functions, to opening doors to opportunities, and, in some cases, pushing participants through the door ²¹. Intermediaries were also found to help with contacting key people able to make links and connections.

All four studies got around the problem of the elasticity of the intermediary concept by focusing on their functions rather than working to an agreed definition. They all, however, concurred on the point that intermediaries operated in the spaces between workers and paid work. Furthermore, the studies showed how intermediaries tended to have bounded identities, such as distributors, matchmakers, staffing agencies, informal career shapers and important others. The studies also revealed how intermediaries were able to operate in the wider environment (Bessy and Chauvin, 2013; Enright, 2013), as well as shape interactions – in the case of gatekeepers (Cohen, 2014) and were able to influence at an intrapersonal level (Bosley, Arnold and Cohen, 2009; Cohen, 2014). The studies, however, made no reference to how intermediaries, in and of themselves, were influenced by wider contextual influences. Furthermore, they revealed the challenge of intermediary being such an elastic concept, with a significant number of individuals, services, organisations, contacts and networks falling inside the term.

2.5.2 More invisible/abstract intermediaries

As mentioned earlier, a further type of intermediary was the more abstract versions of employment status or legal forms. As outlined in Appendix 3 (p.273), employment

²¹ Cohen (2014) identifies instances of a fine line between gatekeeper and intermediary, hence using the phrase about opening the door and pushing them through.

status has been subject to different policy, legal and tax treatments. Their deployment in the public sector was noted as an aside by Coulter (2016) and Cribb and colleagues (2014); however, these were rendered more visible through the introduction of Government's IR35 for the public sector.

Ironically, the Government's own commissioned Taylor Review (2017) identified issues arising with intermediaries and their involvement in increasing levels of flexible working. Finn (2016) had also gone on to note the United Kingdom's relative "light touch" approach to regulating its agencies, as compared to the Netherlands, Denmark and Germany (2016, p.92). Drawing on findings from both Finn's study and the Taylor Review, the Table listed in Appendix 4 (p.275), lists UK agency regulations operating at the time of the research. The Table show that UK agencies were expected to self-regulate, although, some protections for workers were available depending on their employment status. The Table suggest those changing from employee status to agency contract worker status were disadvantaged, and those continuing to transition into limited company status - primarily to avoid umbrella companies - would have compromised their employment protection rights still further.

2.5.3 Traditional careers intermediaries

This subsection offers a quick tour of the publicly funded advice and guidance landscape. At the time of the literature review, no single Government Department, organisation, or body had appeared to be responsible for the provision of careers advice. Figure 8 (p.70) maps the provision of advice and guidance services funded by Government Departments and notes additional market provision.

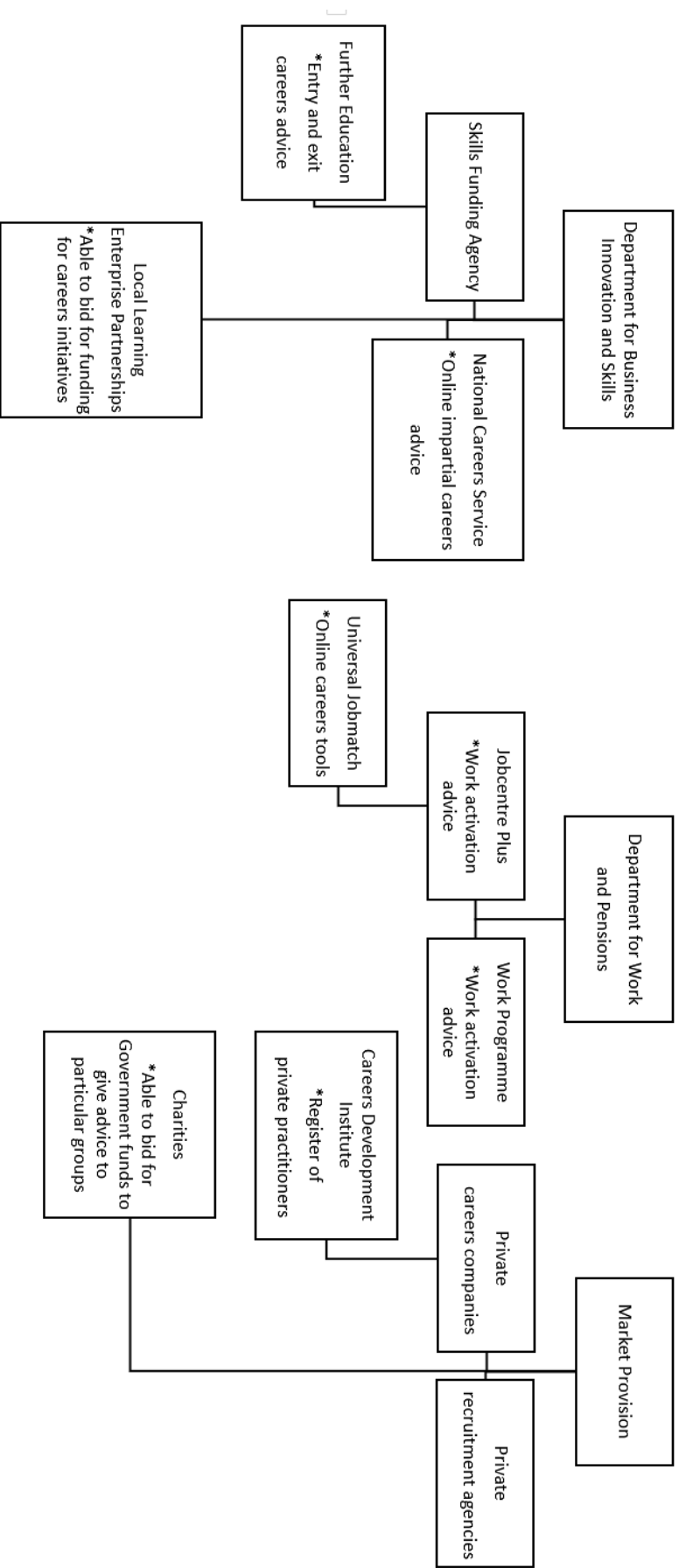


FIGURE 8 UK GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CAREERS ADVICE

Source: Author

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (DBIS) document “The Right Advice at the Right Time” (2012) declared their intention to fund a National Careers Service to meet an entitlement that involved access to impartial careers guidance for anyone over the age of 13. At the time of writing, the provision was primarily online and through webchat whilst face to face advice was available for those on benefits, as stated below:

The National Careers Service (NCS will be available to everyone 13+ online and via helpline/web chat. Face to face service will be available for those aged 19+ (or 18+ if on Jobseekers Allowance), (D.B.I.S, 2012, p.7)

Bowes and colleagues (2013) evaluation of the service, however, suggested that the National Careers Service’s offline offer was rationed by remaining invisible. Their evaluation uncovered a relationship between the DBIS prime contractor, commissioned by DBIS to deliver face-to-face guidance, and Jobcentre Plus, providing access to unfamiliar local referrals. The value of the relationship to the prime contractor was the securing of local referrals enabling them to meet their guidance delivery output targets. The unintended consequence of such a relationship, however, would have been the disproportionate delivery of their services to the unemployed and a rationing of the service to other groups. The consequences of such a provision, for UK older women in transition, would have been that those not registered for universal credit would not have known about their entitlement to impartial careers advice.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) advice and guidance was less impartial: focusing on taking claimants off benefit and returning them to work (Duguerre and Etherington, 2009). Just before this research started, a House of

Commons Work and Pension committee (2014) report had expressed concern about a number of Jobcentre practices: staff being given off benefit targets; the application of a claimant sanctions regime applying pressure on them to accept unsuitable jobs; a one fit all approach to careers advice and support; and a limited range of quality job vacancies listed on Universal Jobmatch (the Jobcentre's online vacancy service). More generally, Hughes (2013) was concerned about the UK career system as a whole. She described England's career support model as a "quasi-market experiment" (2013, p. 226) that was failing those who were having to deal with working for longer (in the context of the rising state pension age).

Conversely, Roberts (2015) argued that the UK career support policy would probably not change the fundamental problem of labour market structure, therefore, at best, could only help clients with exploring all their options and not feel responsible for any wrong decisions. From his perspective, neo-liberal globalisation had placed markets in charge, meaning the only way joblessness might be checked would be if wages remained depressed and part-time temporary work continued to increase. At best, he argued, all that was needed were public or commercial employment exchanges and opportunities for job seekers to network.

2.5.4 Summary

Several relevant findings for the thesis research question have emerged from this subsection: firstly, absence of a clear definition for intermediary, although individuals, services, organisations and networks were all noted - along with their functions. Secondly, intermediaries were able to operate at macro (Benner, 2002; Bessy and Chauvin, 2013; Enright, 2013; Peck et al., 2005) and micro levels as well as informally as friends, colleagues and managers (Bosley et al.; Cohen, 1999). Thirdly, researchers were unanimous in their view that intermediaries operate in the spaces between worker and paid work, although in the case of for-profit

intermediaries able to contribute to building markets to ensure profits (Bessy and Chauvin, 2013; Enright, 2013). Fourthly, intermediaries were also found to operate at various abstract levels, for example in the form of different employment status, subject to different policy, legal and tax treatments. Organisations adopting casualised workforce models, relying on non-employee contracts, would have been able to make significant financial savings. However, such contracts would have been detrimental to the interests of low-income earners: compromising their employment rights and, potentially, placing them outside the right to a minimum wage. Fifthly, in the UK there appeared to be two versions of public sector intermediaries: an impartial guidance version, remaining largely invisible, and a version that focused on putting people claiming benefits into available work.

Returning to the research question:

How do a group of UK older women (aged 50 to rising state pension age) perceive the influence of intermediaries on their work transition(s) during austerity?

At the time of the research, there were clearly gaps in knowledge about how intermediaries, in whatever form they took, were influencing older women's exits from public sector organisations, and their subsequent transitions, during a period of austerity.

2.6 CHAPTER CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has briefly presented findings from excluded literatures as well as findings from bodies of evidence described as UK career and work structures, work transitions and intermediaries. The evidence from UK career and work structures revealed UK older women, previously employed in public sector employment, disproportionately experiencing UK Government's austerity measures. These experiences included cuts to their jobs and the services they relied on to be able to

work. Furthermore, those left behind in public sector jobs, may have been experiencing increases in workloads (Flynn, 2014; Princes Initiative for Mature Enterprise; Labour Research Department, 2014; Fawcett Society, 2014; TUC, 2014). References to the influence of intermediaries on work transition were limited, although there were “suspicions” (Coulter (2016), p.204) that agencies were brokering the return of employees back to the public sector organisations they had left.

The review has also examined work transition literatures revealing that older women’s experiences of transition were as recursive and intertwinings of personal, geographic and paid work transitions across their life span. The aggregated repercussions of such complex transitions, in the context of UK austerity, have led some to claim that many UK women may be unable to fund their future retirements (Bimrose et al., 2015; Duberly and Carmichael, 2015). Only Cohen’s study references intermediary influence, but this is limited to a group of participants interviewed in 1993/4 and then re-interviewed 12 years later, in 2010. As a consequence, her follow-up interviews involved participants reflecting on careers before the Coalition Government’s cuts had started to bite. It is also unclear whether her participants were interviewed whilst in transition.

Further findings from the work transition evidence includes the influence of access to training in mid-career; different types of job exit and their influence on narrative coping; and the influence of varying strengths of professional identity; and the types of opportunities available in economic crisis (such as bricolage). Finally, a number of literatures have reconceptualised transition as follows: life designing; a balance of risks and securities across family, employer and state; UK older women’s pathways into enabled, constrained and vulnerable retirement outcomes; and the possibility of making a transition in employment status whilst continuing to deliver the same work to the same employer.

Finally, the intermediaries' literature identified the concept of intermediary to be fairly elastic and, in the case of employment status, also abstract and invisible. There is some evidence that public sector organisations may have been casualising some of their workforce (Coulter, 2016; Cribb et al., 2014), however, no evidence of how this had been happening during austerity. There was also evidence of a general trend in the UK labour market of increasing numbers of incorporations (Adam et al., 2017). Such flexible contracts were found to provide organisations with a range of benefits, but these had been detrimental to low income earners.

To conclude the literature reveals that, at the time of the research, significant numbers of UK older women were either about to or were in transition in their work. In addition, intermediaries may have been involved in both UK older women's search for and placement into 'market and unpaid care'. However, no studies to date had investigated the nature or influence of such intermediaries on UK older women experiencing transition during a period of austerity.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Recapping on the story of the thesis so far, Chapter One has introduced the researcher as an ex-careers adviser, and older woman, with a personal experience of public sector redundancy. Chapter Two has revealed how, at the time of the research, public sector organisations were responding to the Government's financial cuts and demands for financial savings; for example, making numbers of employees redundant. At the same time, England's older women were being particularly impacted by the cuts because their employment had been concentrated in the sector, and many would have relied on the sector's care services to be able to engage in paid work. The chapter also identified a gap in knowledge about the role played by intermediaries in shaping older women's public sector exits and further transitions. This chapter moves the story on to explain how the researcher went about addressing this gap in knowledge, as well as detailing its methodological approach. The research has explored the stories of 20 older women who were either being made redundant, or who were experiencing redundancy, from public sector jobs.

Overall, the chapter has three aims: firstly, to present an account of how Charmaz's Constructivist Grounded Theory Method was chosen to support its research design; secondly, to provide an account of the implementation of the research resulting in its substantive theory; and, thirdly, to evaluate the research. The chapter is structured into three parts and is written in the first-person voice of the researcher. The benefits of adopting a first person voice are that I will be able to share the ways in which my own subjectivities entered the research, resulting in a more open, accurate and authentic account of the research journey (Coffey, 1999; Charmaz, 2014; Hertz, 1997; McCormack, 2004; Van Manaan, 1988).

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In this section, I present a definition of methodology and introduce Charmaz's (2014) Constructivist Grounded Theory Method (CGTM): the epistemological work I adopted to inform my research design. In reflecting on both my definition of methodology, choice of research question and adoption of CGTM, I acknowledge my starting point for the research design. Furthermore, I reveal the decisions I made about the nature of the social world, how it should be researched and the value of my findings.

3.2.1 What is methodology?

In my review of doing research (Charmaz, 2014; Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Silverman, 2010; Smith, 1998; Yates, 2004; Urqhart, 2013), authors stressed the importance of establishing a research design methodology and shared their definitions of the term. In Chapter Two of the thesis, I deployed the Hollis Matrix to reveal the ontological and epistemological assumptions underpinning science-based research that was found to render older women's experiences of work and transition invisible (Coulter, 2016; Goos & Manning, 2003; Vansteenkiste *et al.*, 2013; Lim *et al.*, 2016). The following definition of methodology, therefore, resonated with me because it acknowledged how decisions, about how to research, placed researcher values at the heart of research design: it is unavoidable.

Methodology: *A system of methods and rules to facilitate the collection and analysis of data. It provides the starting point for choosing an approach made up of theories, ideals, concepts and definitions of the topic; therefore, the basis of a critical activity consisting of making choices about the nature and character of the social world [author added underline for emphasis]. This should not be confused with techniques of research, the application of methodology. (Hart, 1998, p.28)*

In adopting this definition, I acknowledge that my researcher values are embedded in the research design; however, they are made explicit so the reader can evaluate their value. The focus of my research had been to seek a deeper understanding of how intermediaries were influencing older women's transitions during austerity. Early on in the research, I had constructed the following research question:

How do a group of England's older women (aged 50 to rising state pension age) perceive the influence of labour market intermediaries on their transition(s) in work, during austerity?

The question reveals four of my early methodological decisions before fully understanding the importance of methodology. Firstly, in framing my research question as an open question I had nudged myself towards an inductive logic²² epistemology. At the time, I had hoped an open question would provide me with the freedom to explore the meanings my participants attached to the concepts of work, transition and intermediary. I had also hoped to explore the topic of intermediaries more widely given the apparent new era of austerity. Secondly, in choosing the phrase "...transition(s) during austerity", I had assumed contact with participants through time. On reflection, I had taken for granted this would be necessary to develop relationships capable of co-constructing more in-depth knowledge and/or quality data (see also Coffey, 1999; Collins, 1998; Oakley, 2013) - possibly as a result of previous careers adviser experience. Thirdly, in drawing on knowledge from an opportunistic group, rather than a sample, I had known that later on I would be sacrificing the right to generalise more widely about my research findings. However,

²² Induction is a type of reasoning that begins with the study of a range of individual cases and extrapolates patterns from them to form a conceptual category (Charmaz, 2014 p.343).

this would be offset against the opportunity to explore the topic of intermediaries in more depth. Furthermore, by referencing perceptions, I also acknowledged the existence of cognitive processes, such as interpretations, reflections, meaning making, capacity to co-construct and learn (CEDEFOP, 2014). Again, I would be exposing my research findings to challenges of being a collection of subjective values; however, all researchers draw on perceptions by virtue of thinking in language (Vygotsky, 1962).

Charmaz (2014) acknowledges the debate concerning facts and subjective values (relevant to Hollis Matrix explain and understand quadrants) and steers CGTM towards pragmatism. Outlined below, Table 10 contrasts positivism and pragmatism versions of Grounded Theory. Charmaz's version of CGTM is situated on the pragmatism side of the table.

TABLE 10 EPISTEMOLOGICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF GROUNDED THEORY

Positivism	Pragmatism
Follows the scientific method	Emphasises problem solving
Assumes an external reality	Assumes a fluid, somewhat indeterminate reality
Unbiased observer	Defines multiple perspectives
Discovers abstract generalities	Studies people's actions to solve emergent problems
Explains empirical phenomena	Joins facts and values
Separates facts from values	
Truth is provisional	Truth is provisional

Source: Charmaz (2014, p.232)

Applying pragmatism to my own research topic, I would be solving the problem of a lack of in-depth knowledge about how intermediaries were operating during austerity. I also hoped that my research might develop a substantive theory on how

intermediaries were influencing transitions during austerity, as defined by Charmaz below:

A theoretical interpretation or explanation of a delimited problem in a particular area, such as family relationships, formal organisations, or education. (Charmaz, 2014, p. 344)

Returning to my research question, the fourth decision, embedded in the question, had been acknowledgement that context was relevant, in the form of austerity.

To sum up, my literature review had revealed little information on the topic of intermediary influence during austerity. It seemed apparent that any research about the topic would benefit from being exploratory and in-depth. However, in taking such an approach, on the one hand, I would be sacrificing generalising powers for deeper knowledge. On the other hand, generalising would have no value if concepts associated with a phenomenon were not fully understood.

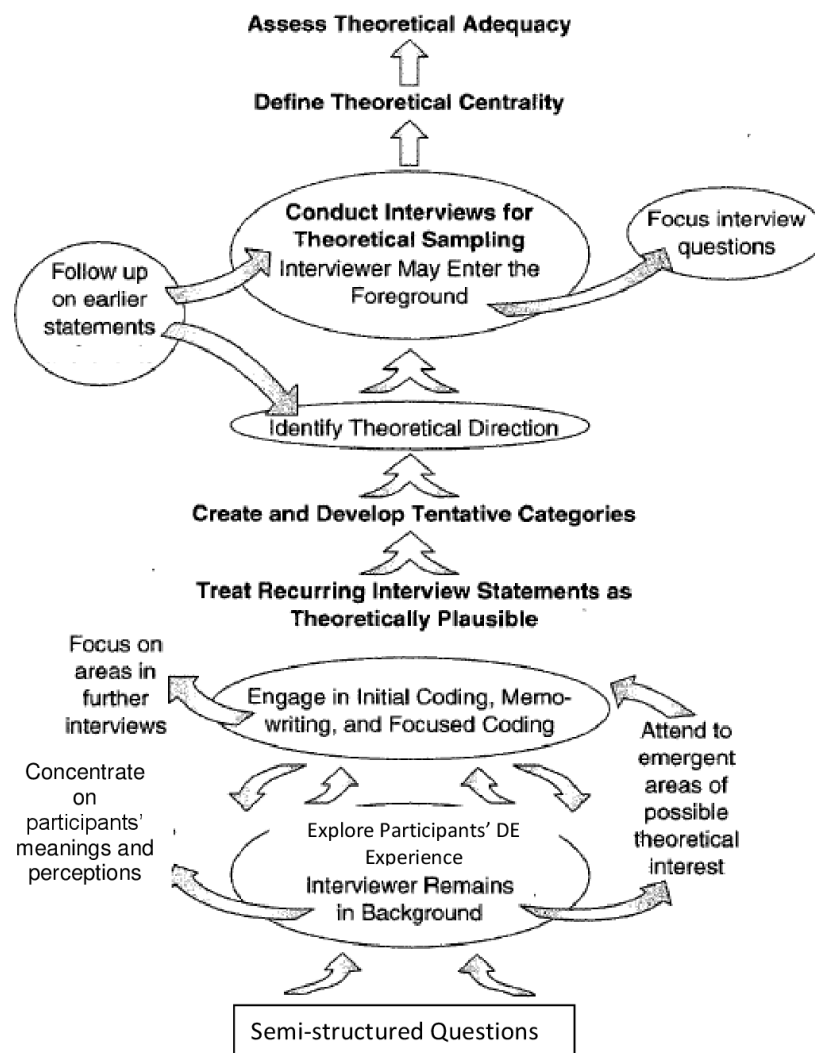
3.2.2 The research design

From the start, Charmaz's (2014) account of CGTM had presented a compelling methodological package. The offer included an inductive and abductive²³ approach to investigating the research topic; intensive interviewing to support the development of an interactional space for empathic listening, reflection and learning new perspectives; an opportunity to collect and analyse data along a research

²³ Abduction: A type of reasoning that begins with the researcher examining inductive data and observing a surprising or puzzling finding that cannot be explained with conventional theoretical accounts. After scrutinising these data, the researcher entertains all possible theoretical explanations for the observed data and then forms hypotheses and tests them to confirm or disconfirm each explanation until he or she arrives at the most plausible theoretical interpretation of the observed data (Charmaz, 2014, p.341).

journey – in the form of reflexive progression; and an opportunity to develop a substantive theory – in my case, a theory about how intermediaries had shaped my participants’ transitions. The following Figure 9, presents her quick glance diagram representing a CGTM journey:

FIGURE 9 INTERVIEWING IN GROUNDED THEORY STUDIES



Source: Charmaz (2014), p. 88

Figure 9 (p.81) presents a research journey that combines interviews and analysis that happened at the same time. Through the research journey, initial codes are saturated with transcript data and then moved up into focused codes, able to support categories. As the researcher's memos track emerging understanding about relationships between categories there is potential for a substantive theory to emerge.

With Hart's definition of methodology in mind, about the researcher's "...choices about the nature and character of the social world" (Hart, 1998, p.28), I confirmed that the choices made by Charmaz, in the construction of CGTM, aligned with my own. Charmaz (2014) explicitly states that CGTM is based on the sociological perspectives of symbolic interactionism and social constructionism. She acknowledges the contributions of Mead (1932) and Blumer (1969) for her definition of symbolic interactionist perspective, as presented below:

Symbolic Interactionism: A theoretical perspective that assumes people create social reality or realities through individual and collective actions. Rather than seeing the world as given, constructionists ask how it is accomplished. Thus, instead of assuming realities in an external world – including global structures and local cultures – social constructionists' study what people at a particular time and place take as real, how they construct their views and actions, when different constructions arise, whose constructions become taken as definitive, and how that process ensues. Symbolic interactionism is a constructionist perspective because it assumes that meanings and obdurate realities are the produce of collective processes. (Charmaz, 2014, p. 344)

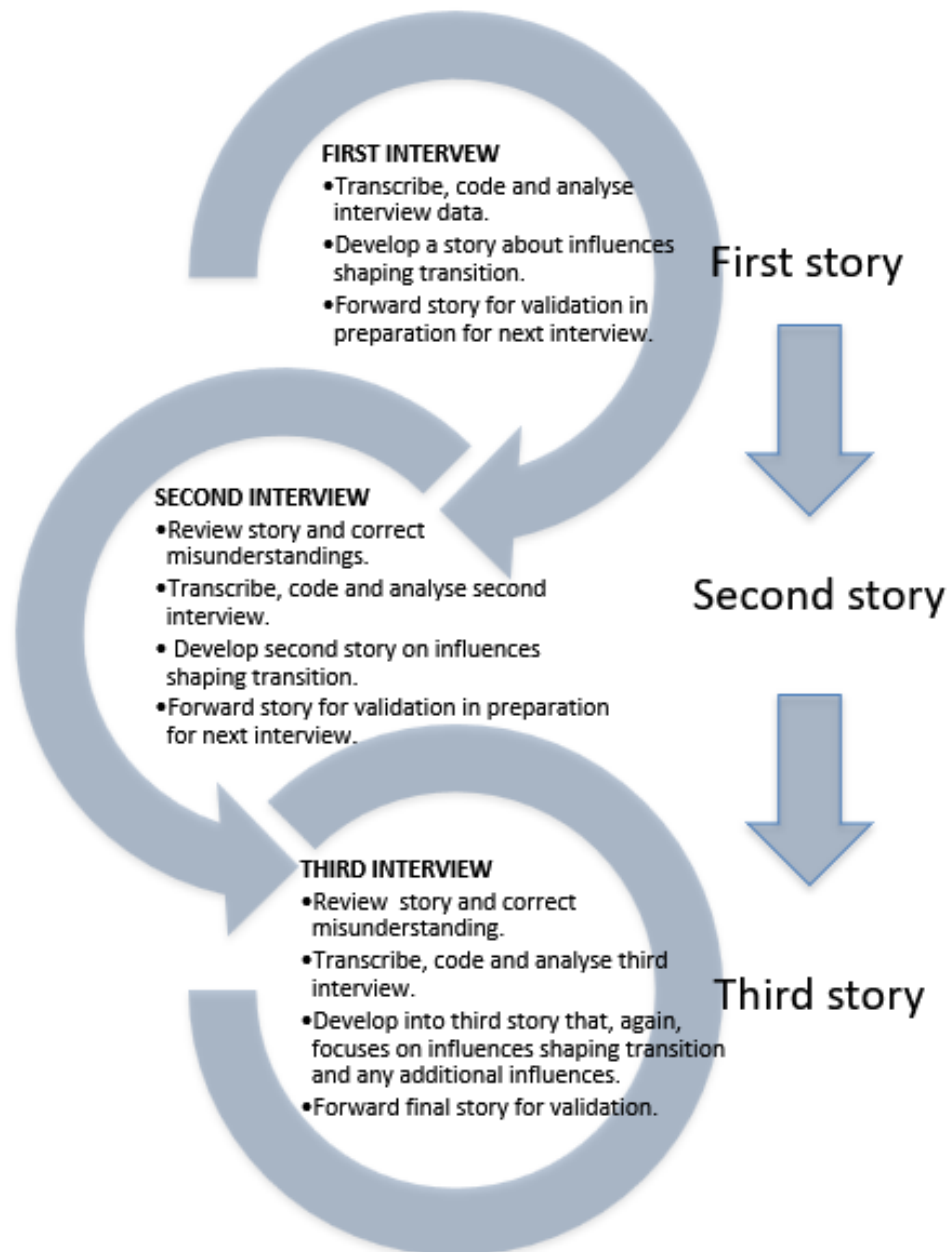
She also acknowledges the contribution of Vygotsky (1934) in her adoption of social constructionism and, again, her definition for this perspective is outlined below:

Social Constructionism: A theoretical perspective that assumes that people create social reality or realities through individual and collective actions. Rather than seeing the world as given, constructionists ask how it is accomplished. Thus, instead of assuming realities in an external world – including global structures and local cultures – social constructionists’ study what people at a particular time and place take as real, how they construct their views and actions, when different constructions arise, whose constructions become taken as definitive, and how process ensues. Symbolic interactionism is a constructionist perspective because it assumes that meanings and obdurate realities are the product of collective processes. (Charmaz, 2014 p.344)

Therefore, in adopting CGTM I was accepting that intermediary influences were constructions of individual and collective action. Furthermore, my research focus would be exploring how intermediary influences on transition were being accomplished in a collective reality. My only adjustment to Charmaz’s version of CGTM was the adoption of McCormacks (2004) storying approach towards in-depth interviews. McCormack had inspired me with her description of turning her analysis of interview transcripts into stories for participants to validate. I had hoped the benefits of storying would include being able to check my interpretation of participants’ interviews with them and, therefore, increase the validity of my research.

Similar to Charmaz, I designed a quick glance diagram to support understanding of my research design (Figure 10, p.84). The diagram does not include theorising beyond the final interview (see Chapter Seven) because CGTM is, and was, an emergent approach.

FIGURE 10 A QUICK GLANCE OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN



Source: Author

To benchmark progress, my research design incorporated Charmaz's sociological perspectives of symbolic interactionism and social constructionism, deployed as a result of adopting her version of CGTM, with a storying adaptation. Additional research decisions included the decision to interview participants on a minimum of three occasions, accepting there might be further communication in the intervals. As mentioned earlier, I had been keen to develop relationships with my participants to support a co-construction approach to understanding the nature and influence of intermediaries through time. I also made the decision to draw on NVIVO software to analyse interview transcripts because of the ease with which transcript data could be cut up, labelled and attached to memos. The next section continues to share information about data collection, presenting the account as a research journey. This enables me to share some of the issues arising along the way.

3.3 THE RESEARCH JOURNEY

The research journey moves from the practicalities of preparing to move into the field to answering the research question and, in answering the question, developing a substantive theory. Presentation of the journey is broken down into subsections that include preparing for entering the field, introducing the participants, experiences of intensive interviews and developing the substantive theory.

3.3.1 Preparing for entering the field

Ethics framed much of my preparation for entering the field. For example, I prepared an information sheet and consent form to comply with my participants' rights to confidentiality, data protection, informed consent and the right to withdraw from the research (Appendix 11 p.322). I designed an interview memory prompt (Appendix 10 p. 321) to remind me to check that my participants had made an

informed decision to join the research, that the interview environment complied with health and safety requirements, that my participants felt comfortable, that they were happy for me to record the interview and that the interview would be appropriately closed (Yates, 2004, p.161). At the time, I also decided to adopt Richardson's (2005) call for research to adopt an ethic of care, described below:

An ethic of care moves a researcher beyond a concern to safeguard the wellbeing of the research participant to a more active engagement with the issue of whether the research is of benefit to the individual research participant. Rather than asking the abstract question of whether the value of the research for the social good outweighs any potential risks to any single participant, an ethic of care prioritises the extent to which the research is or might be of actual benefit to the research participant. The balance here shifts from the social good, in general, to what is good for specific research participants in specific research contexts. A caring relationship between the researcher and research participant is foregrounded. (Richardson, 2005, pp. 6-7)

The ethic of care required me to consider how the research might benefit each individual participant. I hoped that Charmaz's approach to intensive interviewing, and the resulting stories, would offer my participants opportunity to reflect and consider new perspectives on their transition decisions. I was also prepared for the dilemma of a participant asking me for careers advice. In this case, I decided to refuse because I was no longer a registered practitioner; however, I would provide contact details for the National Careers Service.

Further preparations included ensuring I could use the interview audio equipment and that it was in good operational order. Furthermore, I underwent training for how to use NVIVO software to support interview transcription analysis. My plan had been to transcribe my interviews verbatim, upload the transcripts into NVIVO

software and then analyse the transcripts using NVIVO's nodes. With reference to Charmaz's quick glance figure of CGTM presented above (see Figure 9 p.81), I planned to cut up transcript data and attach them to NVIVO nodes, to form initial codes. These nodes could then be sorted into labelled folders to generate focused codes. At the same time, I would generate memos attached to nodes that would start to develop categories; the emergence of relationships between categories providing the potential to develop a substantive theory.

A pilot interview was undertaken to confirm that the documentation and interview prompt were effective. However, I learned that I would need to take more care with my use of language. For example, the participant had been confused by my reference to unpaid work and this was adjusted to refer to activities undertaken in the day. I had been unsure about how to write the interview story. The following three-section structure seemed to evolve into a useful scaffold: reflections on the past, influences shaping the present and ambitions for the future. Feedback from the participant had been positive; the interview had given her the time and space to think about what she wanted from future work.

3.3.2 Participants, interviews, analysis and stories

Despite telephone calls and emails to public sector union officials, various local government managers and Jobcentre Plus managers, no participants came forward. Follow-up calls to reception staff resulted in one receptionist suggesting that sensitivities around recent restructurings might have been to blame. I decided to change strategy and contact participants more directly through a publicity campaign. I designed a poster and displayed it in my local health centre, public sport facilities, a private career company's reception and published it on my Linked In. A local newspaper also agreed to write an article about my research and publish my poster. In total, 22 women from as far and wide as Northampton, Newcastle, Lincoln,

London, Birmingham and Warwick made contact, mainly making initial contact by telephone. Table 11, below, shows how my participants found out about the research.

TABLE 11 HOW PARTICIPANTS FOUND OUT ABOUT THE RESEARCH

Origins of project enquiries converted into participants	Numbers of participants
Poster in a community venue	4
Advert in newspaper	5
LinkedIn advert	2
Private Careers Company	5
Participant networks	6
Total	22

Source: Author

After discussing the research on the phone, I followed up by emailing the potential participant a copy of the information and consent form (Appendix 11 p.322). A week later, I returned their call to answer any outstanding questions and negotiate when and where we would conduct the first interview. All 22 participants went on to have a first interview with two participants asking, later, to withdraw. One of these participants withdrew because of her worsening depression whilst the other had been scared her public sector employer would find out she had talked. Their data has since been removed from the research, as set out in the informed consent process.

In the original research proposal, I used the term 'group' in the research question. I now realise I was actually trying to recruit a 'sample' of older women. For example, I had expected to recruit women who represented experiences of currently exiting work, actively seeking work and recently completed a transition. After only a few participant phone calls, it became clear that these classifications were irrelevant in

the context of many juggling multiple contracts. On this basis, I decided to remain with the 20 participants, all aged 50 to rising state pension age, in the process of exiting or having recently exited a public sector organisation and, potentially, engaging with intermediaries.

In total, 20 participants joined the research and interviews were undertaken from October 2015 to February 2017. Each participant agreed to a minimum of three face-to-face contacts, approximately two to three months apart, with telephone and email contact in between. In total, 58 interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, analysed and turned into stories. One of the 20 participants was only interviewed once and then called to say she had decided to retire and would, at that point, prefer to stop. Details of participants who came to join the research are outlined in Table 12 (p.90). The information presented in the Table has been anonymised and details each participant's fictitious name; their employment situation before transition; their work situation at the end of the research; an approximate age (again to ensure anonymity); caring status (i.e. caring for school age children, supporting adult children living at home and caring for elderly relatives); any personal health issues - including temporary health problems; whether or not they were living with a partner; and, finally, whether or not they had experienced a divorce. Only one participant defined themselves as non-white British, with the other participants all identifying as white British, and none declaring a disability. Consequently, a weakness of the research is its lack of diversity; however, the research's claims are limited to this particular group of women.

TABLE 12 RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Name	Previous employee position	Transition position	Age	Caring work				Personal health issues	Living with partner	Divorce
				School age	Adult children	Grand-children	Elderly relative			
Beth	Civil Service employee manager	Agency contractor (Ltd company)	Early fifties	1	0	0	1	Temp	Y	N
Chantelle	Education employee teacher	Carer	Early fifties	0	2	0	1	Temp	Y	N
Clare	Police Service employee manager	Complex contracting	Late fifties	2	1	0	0	Temp	Y	N
Dawn	NHS Temporary contract	Agency contractor (Ltd company)	Mid fifties	2	0	0	0	N	Y	N
Eleanor	NHS employee occupational therapist	Agency contractor (Ltd company)	Late fifties	0	0	0	0	N	Y	N
Fiona	Local Government employee manager	Carrying on in the same job	Late fifties	0	2	0	0	N	N	Y
Harriet	Local Government employee manager	Agency contractor	Late fifties	0	0	0	1	N	Y	N
Helen	Broadcasting and media employee senior manager	Carer	Late fifties	0	0	0	0	N	Y	N
Jane	Education employee school manager	Carer	Mid fifties	0	0	0	1	N	Y	N
Jenny	Local Government agency contractor (Ltd company)	Carer	Early sixties	0	0	0	1	N	N	N
Joanne	NHS employee manager	Carrying on in the same job	Early sixties	0	1	2	0	Y	Y	N

contd...

Kate	Local Government employee family adviser	Employee Carer	Early fifties	0	1	1	0	N	Y	N
Kaz	Local Government employee Connexions worker	Self-employed, carer and temporary contractor	Early fifties	1	2	0	1	Temp	Y	N
Liz	Local Government employee manager	Student	Early fifties	0	0	0	0	N	N	Y
Louise	NHS charity contact counsellor	Carer	Early sixties	0	0	1	0	N	Y	Y
Rebecca	Private sector employee delivering projects through public sector	Self-employed (Ltd company)	Early fifties	0	0	0	0	N	N	N
Ruth	Education employee teacher	Agency contractor (Ltd company)	Early sixties	0	0	0	0	N	Y	N
Sally	Student anticipated transition into NHS	Carer Volunteer	Early fifties	2	2	0	1	Y	Y	N
Samantha	Further Education employee lecturer	Complex contracting	Early fifties	0	1	1	0	Y	N	Y
Sarah	Public sector quango employee	Carrying on as an employee	Late fifties	0	2	0	1	Y	Y	Y

Initial contact with participants tended to be by phone. For a number of participants, these telephone conversations started with them explaining why they had felt compelled to join the research. For example, Samantha wanted others to know what was happening in the further education sector; Joanne wanted to share her sense of injustice at having to carry on working as a result of the unexpected rise in her pension age; Kate had been in shock from her recent voluntary redundancy and wanted to talk about it; and Clare was relieved to have left and so on.

Interview venues were all chosen by the participants and included a favourite cafe, their kitchen, the family's living room; a number were conducted through Skype. These venues offered insights into my participants' everyday lives. They had talked whilst peeling vegetables, being interrupted by calls from older children, husbands working at home offering us a cup of tea whilst they checked when lunch would be ready, and overseas Skype interviews that had involved returning from an expat club. The venues had helped participants ease into their interviews, acted as a neutral topic to ease both of us into the interview and, often, provided insights into how invisible their household and care work was to them.

After quickly moving through interview prompts, first interviews progressed on to reflecting on past lives, then talking about the present and, finally, thinking about the future. From the start, participants were keen to tell their stories of changes in public sector working conditions, concerns for colleagues and the future of public sector services. Theirs were stories of injustice, outsourcing, overwhelming workloads, high levels of stress, fatigue, anxiety, competing with colleagues and friends for reducing numbers of jobs in another round of restructuring, waiting until the next restructuring and carrying on whilst counting the days to leave. Their exits had included voluntary redundancy, redundancy and/or resignation - followed by a sense of relief and wondering what was coming next.

Second interviews had felt like meeting up with friends. I am sure the storying process contributed to developing relationships more quickly. The first stories started with verbatim transcribing of the previous interview. These transcriptions were uploaded into NVIVO and then lines of text, relating to an influence, were cut up and attached to a node with the label of an influence: money, husband, employment agency – all of these had been initial codes. The initial codes were then attached to memos recording my insights. Then I would sit back and ask the question that Strauss had presented to Charmaz, when she had been thinking of her data, as she describes below:

When thinking about data, Strauss often asked those of us who studied with him, 'What's the story in the data?' (Charmaz, 2014, pp. 95-96)

In my case, I asked Strauss's question of my data then wrote the story and forwarded it to my participants for corrections and validation. These stories were emailed to participants and followed up by telephone calls to confirm receipt of the story whilst also arranging their second interviews.

Invariably, the telephone call offered a further opportunity to talk about their story, as well as what had happened since we last spoke. These 'in between interview' conversations maintained our relationship until the following interview, making second interviews feel more like catching up with a friend. Further benefits of the ongoing storying process included the gentle way it focused conversations on to the research topic. Participants also referred to gaining benefits from their stories (Richardson, 2005). For example, Chantelle described sharing her story with her husband, so that he could appreciate the amount of support she was providing at home; Jane shared her story with her husband to help him understand how she had felt about becoming a carer; on reading her story, Beth, had realised she had been of

value in past jobs, enabling her to disregard disparaging comments experienced from male work colleagues in her previous job; and, finally, Eleanor asked if she could use her stories as evidence of reflection for her continuous professional development (CPD) submission to her professional body. Furthermore, reflecting on the storytelling process, I believe our relationships progressed much further than I expected. The stories had demonstrated to participants that I had listened, cared about what they had to say and, in so doing, I gained their trust. Charmaz describes the benefits of these intensive interviews as less of a performance and more about developing understanding:

A constructivist approach views interviews as emergent interactions in which social bonds may develop. Hence, this approach attends to mutuality during the course of the interview and ways to build that mutuality. In this sense, the interview becomes more than a performance. Instead, it is the site of exploration, emergent understandings, legitimation of identity, and validation of experience. Charmaz, 2014, p.91

I believe storytelling also helped with this process of developing social bonds.

In the second interviews, after reviewing and amending first stories, conversations naturally moved on to updates on changes in their situation. Again, second interviews were transcribed verbatim, and these transcripts were uploaded into NVIVO. Analysis of the second interview transcripts, again, focused on influences, as well as how they were exerting influence on transition events from the first interview to the second. NVIVO nodes, however, tended not to hold changes from first to second interviews, but these were retained in stories. Again, the second story was emailed to the participant and followed up with telephone calls to negotiate a time for the third interview.

Third meetings were even more friendly - starting with a hug and catching up on family news whilst setting up the audio recorder. This time, second stories were reviewed with candid corrections, followed by news of what had happened since we last spoke. Closure of the third story felt more comfortable with my being able to promise a newsletter updating them on research progress. Again, upon my return I immediately started transcribing then uploading interview transcripts into NVIVO for coding and constructing the third story. These stories were written with the following question in mind: *how have influences shaped transition from story one to story three?* Again, these final stories were emailed and I followed up with a final telephone call - seeking final amendments, validation and a reminder that I would be emailing out the newsletter update. As I mentioned earlier, there were no preparations in my research design for what was to happen next, other than being aware that I might be moving into the terrain of deeper theoretical abstractions. At this point, I had collected 58 audio recordings, 58 interview transcripts, NVIVO influence nodes, memos and 58 stories about how intermediaries had influenced the transitions of a group of England's women, during my research.

3.3.3 Further theorising

After thanking participants for their contributions to the research, I returned to Charmaz for guidance on how to start theorising. She described the process as follows:

Theorising means stopping, pondering and thinking afresh. We stop the flow of studied experience and take it apart. To gain theoretical sensitivity, we look at studied life from multiple vantage points, make comparisons, follow leads, and build on ideas. (Charmaz, 2014, p. 244)

Further support was obtained from Hammond's (2018) exploration into literature and firsthand accounts of theorising.

Hammond had been supported along the way by Swedberg (2012), noting the following points made by the author:

- *Theorising is distinctive to theory. Theorising is the process that leads to theory, theory is built, theorising is the process of building. Theorising focuses on discovery rather than justification; justifying comes later.*
- *Theorising is a personal undertaking, which draws on one's own resources and on one's own ideas and experiences.*
- *Theorising can take many different forms but often calls for a different way of thinking which is more intuitive, less procedural, than other steps in the research process.*
- *Observation is critical to theorising by which Swedberg means concentrating on a phenomenon, 'staying with it; and trying to understand it'. Observations can draw on many different resources, but theorising is not confined by the data.*

(Hammond, 2018, p.3)

In Hammond's final reflections, she notes that theorising was most often a search for explanations in patterns and regularities. Furthermore, reflecting on theorising, she concluded that the value of theory was in the integrating of findings and the opportunity to contribute to the social research discourse community.

My own experience of theorising began with the re-reading of participants' stories whilst finding myself, almost intuitively, grouping the stories into different kinds of transition - with some merger at the borders. My final groups of stories included the following: public sector exits and returns (or revolving door transitions); carrying on in work with a change in attitude to working (reluctant employees); geographical relocations; transitions from simple to complex arrangements of work; transitioning into economic inactivity and care; and being held in transition. Next, I started to note down all the different kinds of work that participants described.

There were more kinds of work than expected, for example unpaid transition work, unpaid and paid market work, and unpaid domestic and care work, elaborated on in more detail in Chapter Seven.

Closer scrutiny of stories about revolving door transitions provided me with my first theoretical insights. Far from being single entities of influence on transition, participants had come to learn that intermediaries were interactions, intersections, conversions and convergences of many entities. As a result of this insight, I returned to all the stories to see if other intermediary systems emerged, collating them as I went along as listed in Chapter Seven, Table 14 (p.218).

Next, I started to make a list of every influence perceived by participants and counted a total of 89. However, this list was meaningless without holding on to the story of how the influence had been shaping transitions. Chapter Two had referenced the STF Theory (Patton and McMahon, 2006, 2014), with its memorable figure of different contextual systems and concept of recursion (also listed in Appendix 5, p.276) and these triggered further insights. Starting with the STF concept of recursion, I returned to revolving door stories with the following question: *How are their influences shaping this pattern of transition?* The stories revealed how some influences had acted as triggers of change that I labelled 'transition influences'. Others had nudged change in a particular direction and these I called 'setting direction influences'. Others had been involved in helping participants adjust to changes, so I labelled these 'accommodation influences'. Finally, a number of influences seemed to be able to join up and form locks into a particular change, 'locking influences'. These went on to become focused codes, as follows:

- transition influences;
- setting direction influences;
- accommodation influences; and
- lock influences.

With these new focused codes in mind, I returned to stories of revolving door transitions and started to list transition, setting direction, accommodation and lock influences involved in transition events. Then, I considered where these recursionary influences might be situated within a STF map (see the STF figure presented in Appendix 5, p.276). The results of the analysis are what I later refer to as shorter analytical stories and these are listed in Appendix 9 (p.280-320). Remaining with revolving door analytical stories, I started to plot their recursive influences onto a blank STF map. Then, I colour coded them according to whether the analytical stories noted them as a transition, setting direction, accommodation or lock influence; see the resulting STF map in Chapter Four's introduction. After creating analytical stories for all interviews, I went on to construct additional STF maps for simple to complex transitions (Chapter Five) and economic inactivity and care transitions (Chapter Six).

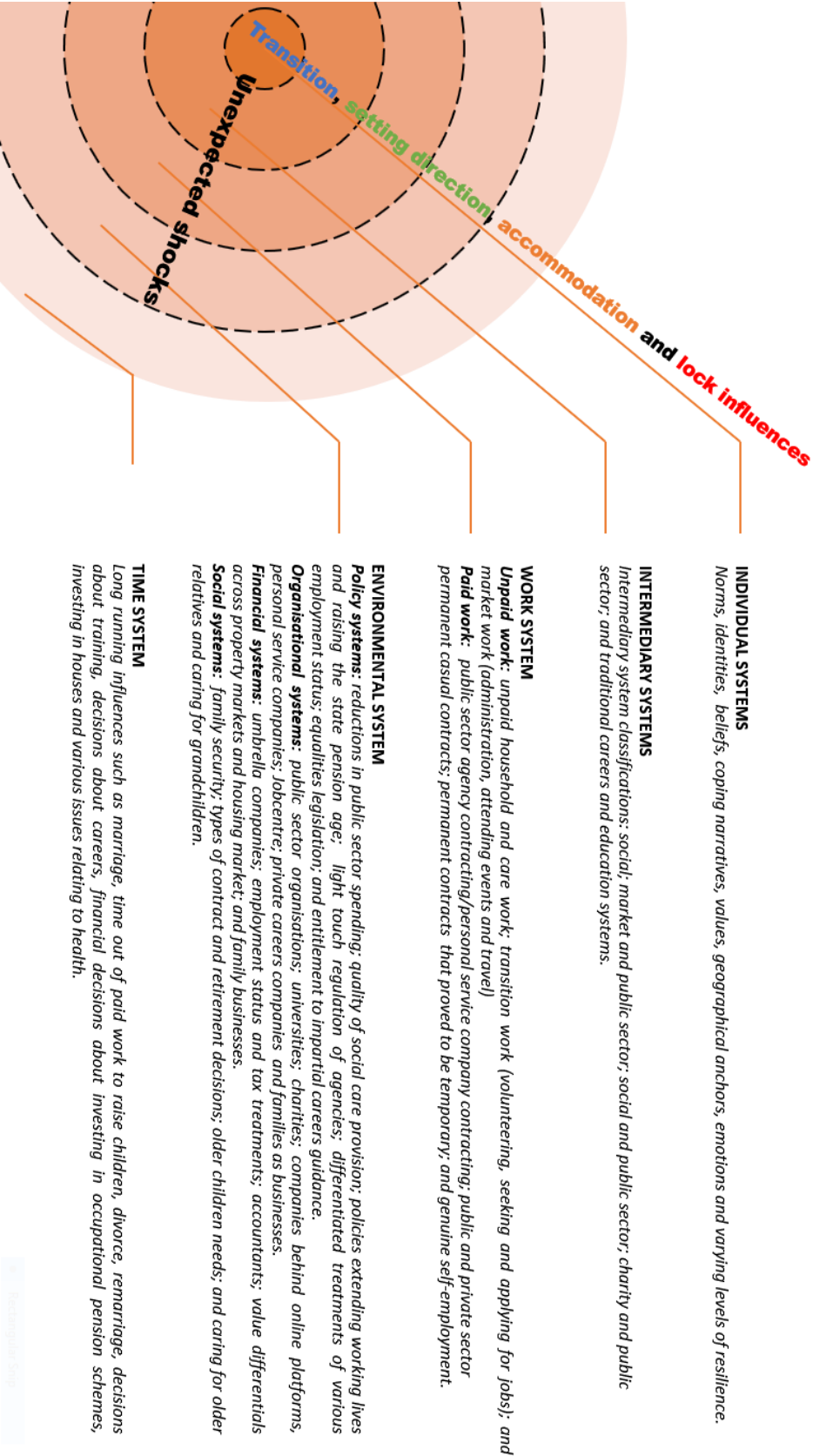
Drawing on shorter analytical stories, I returned to my list of intermediary systems to note down their type of recursive influence on transition events. Using the list of intermediary systems, I drew up Table 15 (p.225) that considered the intermediary systems involved in each pattern of transition, subsequent accommodations made by participants and the benefits gained by the intermediary systems. Returning to the research question, however, I still needed to clarify the nature of participants' perceptions of influences and, furthermore, find a more eloquent way of drawing together all the findings to address the research design's question.

Starting with participants' perceptions, evidence had pointed to two levels of perception: the first, where a participant described the effects of an influence and named it; and the second, where the effects were described but not ascribed to an influence. An example of the first level of perception might be where Joanne stated how an unexpected rise in her state pension age had influenced her attitude to work

(a subjective transition), noted in Chapter Four. In contrast, a second level of perception influence might be where Jane had not perceived the influences of her norms and beliefs about being responsible for family care, yet she had described how their effects led to her decision to resign from her public sector job (Chapter Six).

The final challenge had been how I could draw all these research findings together to support an answer to the research question. I returned to the STF map and had my next insight: the original STF map rendered findings about work and intermediary systems invisible. However, by extending the STF, by inserting a work and intermediary system, they were revealed as demonstrated in Figure 11, (p.100), and discussed further in Chapter Seven.

FIGURE 11 EXTENDED SYSTEM THEORY FRAMEWORK (ALSO DEPICTED IN CHAPTER ONE, FIGURE 1)



Source: Extended System Theory Framework (original version produced by Patton and McMahon 2006, 2014)

3.4 EVALUATING THE RESEARCH DESIGN

To evaluate the research, the section draws on Charmaz's (2014) criteria for assessing Grounded Theory research design, theorising and theories. In addition, the section returns to Chapter Two's Hollis Matrix to consider how the research design's ontological and epistemological assumptions placed limits on its generalising powers. Charmaz's evaluation criteria are deployed as subheadings to structure this section. To begin, the criteria of credibility, originality, resonance and usefulness (Ibid, pp.336-338) are used to evaluate the overall research design. Next, the criteria of plausibility, direction, centrality and adequacy (Ibid., p.87) are considered in the evaluation of the research's theorising journey. Finally, Chapter Two's Hollis Matrix is deployed to evaluate the limits of the research design's generalising powers. The section ends with a summation of its findings. The section starts by considering the credibility of the research design, extending it to include accuracy.

3.4.1 Credibility

To be credible, Charmaz expects the researcher to have intimate familiarity with the research setting and topic. My own backstory of being a careers adviser, the thesis's literature review and the in-depth relationships gained in the field ensured my familiarity with setting and topic. Charmaz also asks if the research's data has sufficient range, number and depth. Starting with range, despite taking an opportunistic approach to sourcing participants, they remained compliant with the research design's profile: women aged 50 to rising state pension age in transition from England's public sector organisations. From a research design perspective, however, the group lacked diversity with only one non-white participant. Clearly, this lack of diversity reduces claims that findings can be generalised across a wider population. However, the research has produced a theory capable of future stress testing with more diverse groups.

Moving on to whether the research was supported by sufficient numbers, the research consisted of 20 participants, 58 verbatim transcripts of the interviews and 58 validated stories about transition. Given the length of time available to undertake the research, and turnaround time for interview stories, any further numbers of participants may have compromised its design. However, what the research may have lost in numbers was offset by gains in its in-depth and rich data - all validated by participants.

Regarding, Charmaz's criteria of depth, the close relationships that developed between myself and participants generated in-depth and, importantly, candid data. The initial idea of returning interpretive stories to participants had been to seek their validation of my understanding of their data. Discussions in the intervals between face to face interviews also, unexpectedly, contributed to progressing relationships further than expected thus raising the quality of the collected data. The importance of building such relationships with participants had been informed by my own careers training and insights from Collin's (1998) research into how Local Government workers had experienced chronic job insecurity. He found that only after several interviews had participants felt they could share their feelings, talk about the impact of their experiences on home lives and have sufficient trust to reach more inter-subjective²⁴ levels of understanding (Charmaz, 2014; Collins, 1998; Coffey 1999; Oakley 2013).

²⁴ Intersubjective: drawn from the phenomenological view of human communication and interaction. Intersubjective relations exist through the ways in which human actors engage in processes of mutual discovery and, in so doing their identities are in a process of continual transformation (Smith, 1998 p.345)

Charmaz also raises the question of whether systematic comparisons between observations, and between categories, are made to ensure sufficient empirical observations to support categories. In the case of my research journey, I found the process of using NVIVO, to cut up transcript data for analysis and reforming it into interview stories, useful but unhelpful in developing focused codes to represent change through time. This was because influences, or initial codes, failed to hold the effects of change through time (also noted by McCormack, 2004, p.231). The shift to analysing interview stories, however, addressed the problem and went on to reveal how influences (initial codes) had been operating as transition, setting direction, accommodation and lock recursionary influences on transitions (focused codes). Furthermore, when experimenting with situating focused codes into STF maps, these were inadvertently raised into categories in the form of systems of influences. These were later labelled as individual, intermediary, work, environmental and time systems. The empirical regularities supporting initial codes (influences) are held in my NVIVO data. Numbers of initial codes supporting focused codes, and focused codes supporting categories, are presented in the shorter analytical stories in Appendix 9 (pp.280-320).

The research design's question also introduced the concept of perception. Findings from Chapter Two revealed the influences of policies and, certainly, participants noted their effects on transitions, often without naming the policies. The value of mapping participants' influences into an STF had been that the effects of these more invisible influences could be retained as a sub section within the environment system.

Finally, Charmaz asks if there are strong logical links between data, argument and analysis. In the case of this research, logical links were provided by participants' shorter analytical stories (Appendix 9, pp.280-320), table of intermediary systems (Table 14, p.218) and the table analysing how intermediary systems had shaped

patterns of transition (Table 15, p.225). The extended STF map, presented in this chapter and Chapter Seven (Figure 38, p.234), goes on to support my interpretation of how intermediary systems influenced the transitions of the research participants and, also, supports its substantive theory. Finally, the sixth question asks if I have provided enough evidence of my claims to allow the reader to form an independent assessment. As well as the data in the appendices, the following chapters reveal further data to support my claims and this criterion will be considered in more detail in the thesis conclusion.

A further feature of this research, not included in credibility, is accuracy. This research is accurate in four different ways. Firstly, data was collected whilst participants experienced intermediary systems - limiting recall inaccuracies. Secondly, interview transcripts were transcribed verbatim - retaining detail and ensuring analytical accuracy. Thirdly, analysis was conducted in NVIVO software that supported individual line by line analysis of data into nodes and memos - ensuring a more accurate rendering of data into interview stories. Fourthly, participant involvement in checking, correcting and adjusting interview stories ensured interpretations continued to remain, accurate, valid, and, therefore, credible for them - enhancing credibility and supporting development of a more valid and substantive theory.

3.4.2 Originality

The second of the evaluation criteria set by Charmaz (2014) is originality. As the thesis progresses, three new and original findings are presented. These findings include the discovery of intermediary systems, a public sector revolving door transition that had involved changing employment status and an interpretive and substantive theory explaining how intermediary systems influence transition(s) in

complex work, all supported by an extended System Theory Framework (STF) figure (Figure 38, p.234).

3.4.3 Resonance

The third of the evaluation criteria is resonance, where the researcher should reflect on whether or not categories portray the experiences of research participants. In the case of this design, its substantive theory portrays how participants' experiences of intermediary systems contributed to shaping their transition(s) in work, in the context of wider influences. However, context does not extend to wider global influences - a consideration for further research. The research also revealed a number of taken for granted terms, for example work, intermediary and transition. In addition, with support from the STF, taken for granted recursions between unperceived wider environmental system influences, such as policy, and individual system influences, such as norms, were revealed. As a result, the research's substantive theory was able to establish links between larger collectives or institutions and individual lives.

3.4.4 Usefulness

The fourth, and final, criterion is usefulness. From the participants' perspective, many found their interview stories useful. For example, submitting their stories as evidence of reflection to a professional body, sharing them with loved ones to gain appreciation for their care work and reflecting on their stories to gain new insights on their situation. In this respect, the research design was useful to its participants. From a research design perspective, CGTM was useful in offering sufficient flexibility to explore the research topic and delve more deeply into the nature of intermediaries, transition and work. Storying also privileged the voices of

participants in constructing knowledge about intermediary influences and, as mentioned earlier, proved useful to the participants. From the perspective of contributing to knowledge, then the research design had been a logical choice given the topic of intermediary influence had needed to be both inductively explored and required more in-depth understanding. In this respect, the features and benefits of CGTM made it a logical choice. However, CGTM also limited the generalising power of the research's findings. Drawing on the Hollis Matrix, the research findings were, clearly, situated on the understanding side of the Hollis Matrix, between action and game: offering understanding with only limited powers of generalising. Finally, from a policy perspective, the research may go on to prompt further investigation into the extent to which market and public sector intermediaries are involved in public sector organisations. Chapter Eight elaborates on the research findings' implications for policy, although acknowledges they are still based on a substantive theory with ontological limits.

Next, we move on to evaluate the research's theorising journey into an interpretive and substantive theory.

3.4.5 Plausibility, direction, centrality and adequacy

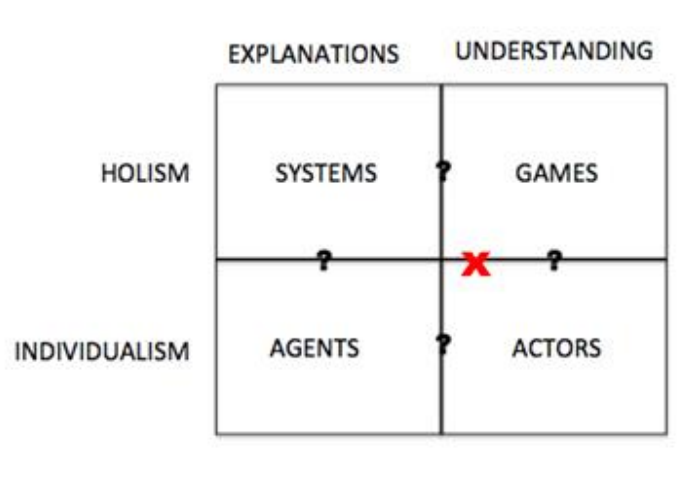
Charmaz described the importance of theoretical plausibility, direction, centrality and adequacy (Charmaz, 2014, pp.87-88) in theory construction, and these are used to evaluate the researcher's theorising journey into theory. Firstly, as previously mentioned, my own careers adviser background ensured plausibility because I was able to draw on this background to interpret evidence about influences, particularly evidence about traditional careers and education intermediaries. Secondly, by holding codes in analytical stories (see Appendix 9, pp.280-320), as McCormack (2004, p.231) had noted, direction and centrality were maintained by addressing the problem of losing context after cutting up the data in NVIVO. Thirdly, adequacy was

further enhanced by being able to validate the research's findings by drawing on the Systems Theory Framework Theory's own evidence base. Fourthly, by sharing the analytical process with participants, up to and as far as interview stories about influences, adequacy was further reinforced through their validation. Fifthly, and finally, analysis of influences in the process of STF mapping, then remapping into the extended STF, resulted in ensuring all the research findings were represented, therefore maintaining direction and focus when developing the theory.

3.4.6 Returning to the Hollis Matrix

In Chapter Two, the Hollis Matrix tool, summarised earlier in Figure 3 (p.17), was deployed to reveal ontological and epistemological assumptions embedded in the literatures being reviewed. The same figure is presented again, this time with a red cross indicating where this research's theory might be situated.

Hollis Matrix (also presented in Chapter Two, p.21)



Source: Hollis (1994)

The red cross is placed on the Hollis Matrix understanding side because, on this side, studies focus on investigating the experiences of a small number of cases to gain in-depth understanding; in this case, of participants' perceptions of intermediary influence. Being situated on this side of matrix means that on the one hand, the theory can only generalise as far as its participants' experiences. On the other hand, its rich in-depth understanding may go on to inform future Hollis Matrix explanation side studies; for example, a survey-based study would potentially have more generalising powers.

3.4.7 Summary

To sum up, the research has met Charmaz's evaluation criteria of credibility - extending it to include accuracy, originality, resonance and usefulness. The research's theorising journey also meets her criteria of plausibility, direction, centrality and adequacy. Drawing on the Hollis Matrix, the theory can be situated on its understanding side, offering in-depth understanding but limited powers to generalise.

3.5 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

To conclude, the research design's methodology is a version of CGTM, adapted to privilege the voices of participants, through participant validated stories. The research design has met Charmaz's general criteria of credibility, originality, resonance and usefulness (Ibid., pp.336-338). In addition, the research's theorising journey, into an interpretive and substantive theory, also met her criteria of plausibility, direction, centrality and adequacy (Ibid., p.87). On the one hand, the research will present rich and in-depth data about intermediaries and their influence on transition, along with a number of original contributions to knowledge. On the

other hand, its findings remain substantive. Future research, however, may address these ontological limitations.

CHAPTER FOUR: TRANSITIONS WITHIN THE PUBLIC SECTOR: REVOLVING DOORS, SUBJECTIVE TRANSITIONS AND RELOCATING

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter draws on interviews, interview stories and shorter analytical stories to provide brief accounts of eight participants' transitions. In doing so, it introduces three types of transition – revolving door, reluctant employees, and relocators – all experienced by a teacher, an occupational therapist, two local Government senior managers, two NHS workers, a Government senior manager, and a higher education worker. Their transitions involved participants delivering the same or similar work for public sector organisations, despite having recently exited public sector employee contracts or expecting to exit them. The first transition consisted of exiting a public sector employee contract and then returning as an agency contractor, named here as a revolving door transition. The second transition consisted of participants expecting to leave the public sector, but remaining, and experiencing a changed attitude to work, named here as reluctant employees experiencing subjective transitions. The third transition involved participants relocating to continue their public sector work, named here as relocators. Before presenting findings about how influences came to shape these participants' transitions, it is worth briefly explaining how the idea of intermediaries as intermediary systems arose, along with the idea of influences having transition, setting direction, accommodation and lock influence.

The complexity of revolving door influences, and their relationships with one another, necessitated sketching them out on paper, to see how they related to one another. Early diagrams had brought to mind Chapter Two's Patton and McMahon's (2006, 2014) System Theory Framework Theory STF) figure, the original also listed in Appendix 5 (p.276). The figure had represented their meta theory of how socially

constructed feedback mechanisms, operating through time, environmental, organisational and individual open systems were able to shape change. The dotted lines between their recursive influences and systems represents the “...permeability of the boundaries of each system.” (2006, p.5).

I had roughly drawn a similar STF outline on paper and started to situate influences arising in the analytical stories describing similar revolving door transitions. For example, Ruth’s analytical story in Appendix 9 (p.280) starts with noting the following:

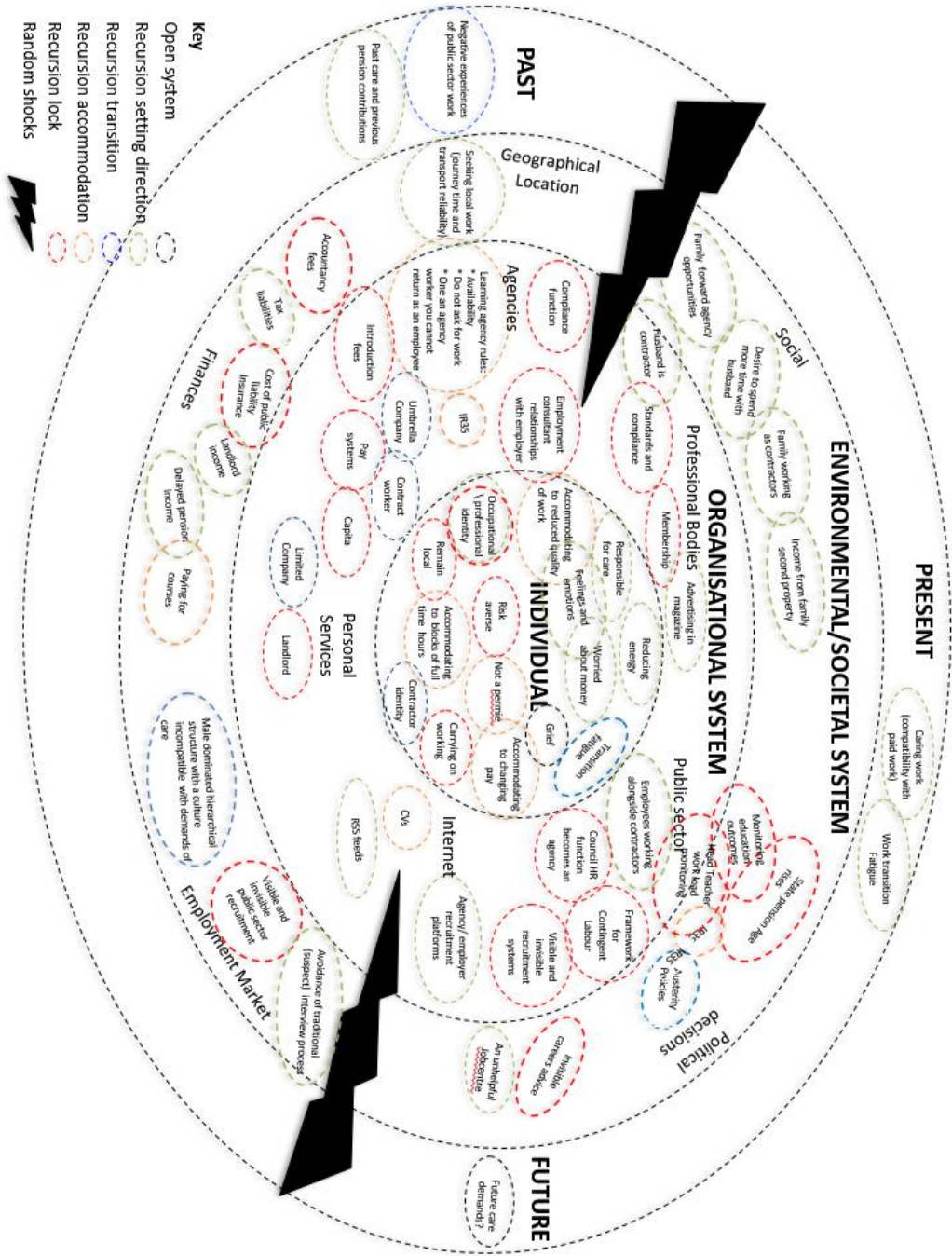
Extract from Ruth’s Analytical Story

- a) Resigns from her public sector employee contract as a reception teacher due to an excessive workload, the stress of continuous observations and a challenging relationship with her Head Teacher. *[Environment (workload, monitoring, Head Teacher) recurses with Individual (feelings) resulting in recursion transition - exit]*
- b) Other supply teachers recommend “good” agencies *[Individual (identity as teacher) recurses with Social Intermediaries (other supply teachers) leading to recursion direction towards teacher agency worker]*
- c) Her husband is also working as a supply teacher *[Individual (identity teacher) recurses with Social Intermediary (husband) leading to recursion direction towards teacher agency worker]*

The influences, noted in the extract, namely workload monitoring, feelings, occupational identity and husband as contractor, were drawn in the STF sketch, presented in Figure 12 (p.112). As well as situating these influences in the STF model, I began to colour code them; for example, blue for if they had instigated or triggered a transition (transition influences); green for contributing to setting the

direction of a transition (a setting direction influence); orange for influences requiring a participant to accommodate change; and red for when an influence had contributed to locking in or out a transition (a lock in or out influence). Figure 12 (p.112) began to require additional items within the organisational system such as professional bodies, agencies, husband as contractor and personal service companies. Later, these were to form intermediary systems, listed in Chapter Seven, Table 14 (pp. 218-223).

FIGURE 12 SYSTEM THEORY FRAMEWORK MAP (STF) OF REVOLVING DOOR TRANSITIONS



The Chapter is structured into three sections, each focusing on a type of public sector transition. Each section presents brief stories of that type of transition followed by the influences that shaped them. These stories illustrate how all influences, particularly intermediary systems, came to shape participants' transitions. The final section presents a summary of the Chapter's findings.

4.2 REVOLVING DOOR WORKERS

The section draws on participants' revolving door transitions to illustrate how various influences came to shape these transition. It starts by presenting exemplar stories of this type of transition, and then considers the role played by intermediaries along with their recursionary effects.

4.2.1 Stories of transition: revolving door workers

Five participants appeared to have entered a public sector revolving door. Ruth, Eleanor, Beth, Dawn and Harriet all exited public sector organisations as employees only to return as public sector contractors. Brief accounts of these transitions are presented next, starting with Ruth.

Ruth had been a teacher in her early sixties. Reflecting back on her employee experience, Ruth recalled having to cope with increasingly unmanageable workloads, increasingly stressful class observations and, as the school's only union representative, a certain amount of bullying from her Head Teacher. In her first interview, she described how she had come to resign, then gone on to engage with three agencies, and, at the time, how she had been dealing with a difficult umbrella company leading to her being underpaid. In her second interview, and feeling much happier, Ruth had been delivering a contract in the same local school, through her

preferred agency. By her third interview, her contract had been renewed again in the same school. Both she and the school, however, had become increasingly concerned by the Government's new IR35 rules²⁵. To prepare for IR35, her agency had already reduced her pay and been charging the school an extra £5.00 per day to cover IR35 administration costs. Ruth and the Head Teacher had discussed employing her directly, however, both were put off by the risk of being charged agency introduction fees, and the thought of the time and stress involved in arranging a formal interview.

In contrast, Eleanor, was relieved to be leaving her long-term employee job as an occupational therapist. The workload had become increasingly challenging and, after observing her husband and other agency contract workers, she came to realise agency contracting would be much less stressful. Over the course of our interviews, with recommendations from contracting colleagues, she had moved from a small local agency to a larger agency with a more supportive employment consultant. After the move, she decided to give up the unreliable umbrella company, recommended by the agency, to adopt limited company status irrespective of the expense of liability insurance and accountancy fees. As a limited company, she had continued delivering her public sector services through an agency.

Beth, a civil service manager, in her early fifties, experienced a slightly different transition. In her first interview, she reflected on the incompatibility of her civil service management role with being a mother and occasional carer for her elderly parent. Her list of reasons for deciding to resign included a male colleague failing to

²⁵ Implemented in April 2017, IR35 specifically challenged contractors who supplied services to organisations, often known as a 'personal services company', or a limited company, who, according to HMRC should have been classed as 'disguised employee'. This meant that HMRC might not recognise them as 'self-employed' and, therefore, expected them to be taxed the same way as permanent employees: falling inside IR35.

appreciate her need to leave meetings on time due to childcare commitments, line management responsibilities reducing opportunities to work from home and the UK's unreliable transport network resulting in being repeatedly late when needing to relieve her childminder. After her resignation, she managed to negotiate a return to the civil service, on a one-to-two day a week contract, delivering executive coaching through an online communication service. By the final interview, she was delivering two contracts to the civil service: one directly with herself, via a personal contacts, and the other as a limited company. The second contract required her to become a limited company and contract through one of a number of agencies, listed as compliant on the Government's Framework for Contingency Workers.

Dawn, in her mid-fifties, had previously been delivering an NHS temporary employee contract. In the first interview, she reflected on her past nursing career and how it had been interrupted by pregnancies, illness and the demands of raising two children. Now her children were older, she was keen to address her severely compromised pension pot. Her brother, also an agency contractor, had revised her CV resulting in converting five NHS applications into five interviews, and all had happened in the preceding five weeks to the research interview. Unfortunately, none converted into job offers and, in the research interview, she described being both despondent and exhausted. By the second interview, she had attended an IT training course and added the new skill to her CV; she had known it would attract the agencies. An agency employment consultant, whose name she recognised from an IT job search platform, signed her up, after which she had been continuously contracting. Dawn had been benefitting from the employment consultant's good relationship with NHS Regional Trust managers, and these relationships had facilitated continuous contracting work. By the third interview, she had abandoned the agency's umbrella company and become a limited company whilst continuing to deliver contracts through her preferred agency.

Finally, Harriet, in her late fifties, had exited her council employee job only to return through her ex-council's human resources department's conversion into an agency. In the first interview, she described accepting voluntary redundancy from her job as a manager. She said that she could no longer cope with the distress of colleagues being made redundant, the pressure from yet another new manager introducing more new changes and the overall stress of her council job whilst trying to care for her elderly mother. Harriet continued with her volunteering but found searching for a new part-time job both fatiguing and emotionally overwhelming. Her sister, who also worked at the council, had told her about how the council's human resource department was converting into an agency, and she had been keen to investigate further. After applying to the council's new agency, and passing various assessments, she started as an agency contract worker managing complaints and compliments and was excited at the idea of meeting up with ex-work colleagues.

To sum up, these accounts illustrate public sector revolving door transitions where research participants changed employee status from employee to contract worker. The influences shaping these transitions, including the influence of intermediary systems, are outlined in more detail next.

4.2.2 Transition influences

The participants' analytical stories (Appendix 9, p.280) revealed a number of influences triggering transitions: exiting public sector employee jobs, entering contract work, for some adopting limited company status – all noted as blue circles on the STF map (see Figure 12, p.112). Examples of these transition influences included challenging public sector working conditions, clashes between paid work and unpaid care work, job search fatigue and problems with umbrella companies. More detailed illustrations of these types of transition influences are presented next.

All five participants' stories of revolving door transitions referred to the challenging working conditions being experienced in their respective public sector organisations. For Harriet, these included increasing workloads, excessive monitoring of work, feeling undervalued, witnessing other workers' distress and her inability to meet care needs required at home. Harriet had validated an analysis of how her transition influences had combined to trigger resignation and exit. The analysis was presented in her story and is presented in Table 13 below. At the time, the transition influences were described as push and pull factors, only later being understood as transition influences.

TABLE 13 TRANSITION INFLUENCES LEADING TO RESIGNATION

Push Factors	Evidence of pull factors
Time commitment: <i>Interview one: My manager had told me he wanted someone who would be in post for the next five to seven years plus and I didn't think I could commit to that</i>	Caring responsibilities: <i>Interview one: Having an elderly Mom and full-time working is not really compatible with helping her more.</i>
Continuous reviews and saving: <i>Interview one: I felt that I was getting the message...our admin and finance service keep being reviewed and reviewed and reviewed and not technical support or other parts of the Council. So we had had lots of cuts and made lots of savings and every year had to make more budgetary savings, close sites, relocate teams...</i>	Harriet's mother's fall: <i>Interview one: ...my Mum fell and broke her hip a couple of years ago and I think she needs our help with housework and hospital appointments.</i>
Stress and new management: <i>Interview one: ... my newest manager I only had him for six months and I did feel that he and the manager I had for a year before then I don't honestly think they realised, they know what we went through...</i>	
Could no longer cope with being a bystander to others suffering: <i>Interview one: I've done it for many years, closing of buildings, seeing staff being ... it's very sad, I think it eats away at you, however strong you are, I think it's one of the things you succeed at it and you do the job but you don't enjoy seeing other people suffer...</i>	

Source: Harriet story three

The incompatibility of care and paid work also acted as a transition influence for Beth. She described repeated experiences of meetings attended by more senior men running over time. She had always been the only one leaving early, and,

consequently, had felt her value at work slipping, along with her own confidence. She described her experience in the following statement:

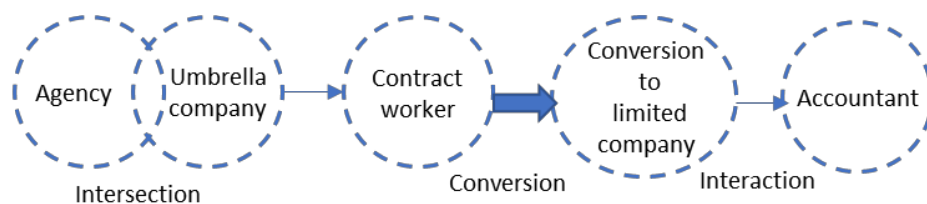
It's quite hard to explain to people doing it; I mean most women got it but the men... It's become a very male hierarchy at the office and beyond - they found that really quite unprofessional [Author: needing to leave meetings on time to catch the train home and relieve her daughter's childminder] I would say, and I think, it took me down in their estimation, by admitting that it was an issue for me. (Beth transcript data from interview one)

A further transition influence was avoidance of transition fatigue, associated with intensive job searching, completing application forms and attending interviews. Dawn offers a useful illustration of how her transition fatigue began. During her first interview, she became emotional as she described trying to combine preparing for her family's Christmas, working full time and applying for five different employee vacancies via the NHS online job platform. All five applications had gone on to convert into job interviews, and, having used up all her annual leave, none had materialised into job offers. She had been devastated by the experience; consequently, being taken on the books of a well-connected employment consultant, able to supply continuous NHS contracting work, had been very welcome.

Similarly, Harriet had described feeling overwhelmed by job applications and agency emails clogging up her inbox. After joining her ex Council's temping agency, she had been relieved that her job searching had come to an end. Ruth also described feeling tired and disappointed at failing to secure a local employee teaching job, but these feelings had ended after she started contracting. Eleanor also intended to set herself up as a private occupational therapist, however, booking rooms and organising public liability insurance had required more effort than contracting.

Finally, agency payment systems also acted as transition influences, triggering contract workers to change to limited company status. Ruth, Eleanor, Dawn and Beth had all experienced difficulties with umbrella company payment systems. In efforts to avoid the problem, Eleanor, Dawn and Beth changed to limited company status and engaged personal accountants to support them with managing their tax returns. Figure 13, below, captures the intermediary system involved in their conversions from agency contractor to limited company status (additional intermediary systems are detailed in Chapter 7, Table 14 (pp. 218-223)).

FIGURE 13 MARKET AND PUBLIC SECTOR INTERMEDIARY SYSTEM (TYPE TWO (A))



Source: Beth, Dawn and Eleanor

To sum up, challenging public sector conditions, incompatibility of paid and unpaid care work, and avoidance of transition fatigue had resulted in transitions from employee contracts to agency contracting. The intermediary systems' outsourced payment system, or umbrella companies, had exerted further transition influence resulting in conversions to limited company status.

4.2.3 Setting direction influences

Drawing on the same analytical stories, of revolving door transitions, certain influences appeared to set the direction for this type of transition. These are referred to as setting direction influences and were colour coded green on the STF map. For example, Ruth and Eleanor's husbands were both agency contractors and role modelled contracting work, as were the contractors working alongside them when

they were employees. Further examples of these types of influences were concerns about pension pot deficits (Dawn), bias in the visible recruitment system (Dawn), control over job locations (Beth and Harriet), strong occupational identities (Eleanor and Ruth), support from family members already in contracting (Ruth, Eleanor, Dawn) and early exposure to agency vacancies on job search platforms (Dawn). These illustrated the influence of three different intermediary systems. These setting direction influences are presented in more detail next.

Starting with the setting direction influence of pension pot deficits. Reflecting on the past, Dawn described taking time out of work to deal with postnatal illness, childcare, informally helping her brothers with their work and long periods of self-employment. In returning to the NHS, as a contracting IT analyst, she had hoped to address shortfalls in her pension contributions, although she was keen that any paid work to address her pension deficit would still be intellectually stimulating, as she validates in the story below.

Extract from Dawn Story One

Interview one: *I've got no pension worked out really, managed to mess all that up, I've got 10 years, haven't I? I'm still healthy and I did say to someone the other day, I'm very grateful that I am even able to get a job because someone whose been out of a job for a long time could be stacking shelves couldn't they, so I am lucky in that sense.*

... The challenge was “getting in” when the sector seems to prefer “young bucks” and presents a façade of available vacancies that are really earmarked for internal candidates.

Validated by Dawn

In referring to being lucky to get in, Dawn had also been referencing the challenges she experienced trying to gain access to jobs through the more visible and conventional NHS recruitment system. At the time, she perceived the visible recruitment system as biased towards internal candidates and young men, setting her in the direction of agency contracting.

Beth and Harriet had also referred to the setting direction influence of controlling job locations. For example, Beth and her daughter both found commuting stressful, setting Beth's job searches either closer to home or working from home. In the past, caring responsibilities had meant little or no flexibility over leaving meetings to catch her train because her daughter's childminder had been waiting. Equally, when she had left meetings early, she had felt she appeared less of a team player, contributing to a loss of confidence, validated in the following extract.

Extract from Beth Story Three

Interview one: *...Ellie [daughter] crying when I left in the morning and the winter being the worst because it was dark, you know and then every time I didn't get the train, she thought I wouldn't get home and there would be tears on the phone and always not doing a great job...*

Then in the next interview:

...I just couldn't give that time because of daughter and the travelling, and I think I'd just be in the same situation again, and I've not been there, not being a team player, not being visible, having to leave at key points and catch a train...

Validated by Beth

In the third interview, she described her determination to work at home:

I am much clearer about people's expectations of how they should expect me to work and I will be much firmer now about how much I am working at home and that is non-negotiable now. (Beth transcript data from interview three)

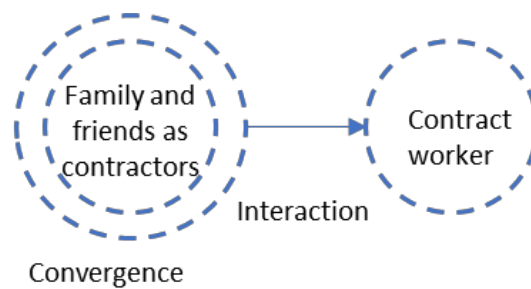
Harriet was also determined to remain in part-time local work, thereby minimising stress whilst providing increasing levels of care at home. Her determination to remain local was evidenced by her rejection of a job with her favourite charity that would have required commuting. Instead, she had preferred to work for her local council's new agency as a contractor.

Occupational identity was another setting direction influence, with identity statements peppering all five transcripts. Examples of these statements had included: *I am a teacher* (Ruth), *I am an occupational therapist* (Eleanor) and *I am a carer* (Harriet) – although Harriet had not perceived caring as an occupation. Such statements were taken for granted by participants, and, with no one to contest them, had set direction towards either working for agencies, or taking responsibility for family care.

Ruth, Eleanor and Dawn all had family in contracting, again, setting direction towards agency contracting and sustaining contracting (represented as a market and social intermediary system in Figure 14 (p.123)). For example, Ruth's husband had been an agency supply teacher and had second checked all her umbrella company payments. Eleanor's husband had also been a supply teacher. He had strongly recommended she avoid the umbrella company and had advised her to establish a good rapport with the agency employment consultant to ensure continuous contracts. Dawn's brother, also an IT agency contractor, had helped her develop her winning contractor CV. He had also supported her with identifying general online recruitment platforms that had advertised NHS IT contracts, enabling her to

circumvent NHS Direct. He had also reassured her that being treated like an outsider was normal for contractors – see the next section on accommodation and the story of ‘permies’ and contractors. Family social intermediaries had been important in brokering and sustaining the women in contracting work and, had contributed to their conversions to limited company status. The structure of the intermediary system involved in transition to contractor status and then on to limited contract status is described as a market (agency) and social (family and friend contractors) intermediary convergence leading to sustained agency contracting and is depicted in Figure 14 (p.123) below.

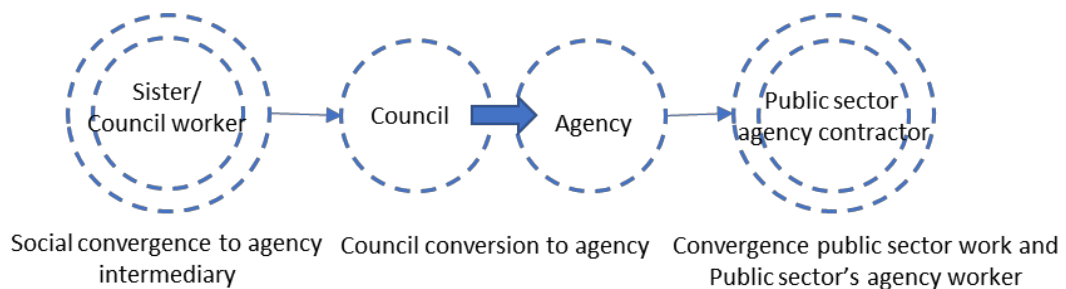
FIGURE 14 MARKET AND SOCIAL INTERMEDIARY SYSTEM (TYPE THREE (A))



Sources: Ruth, Eleanor and Dawn's stories

Harriet's experience was slightly different. She had first heard about her council's human resources department setting up their own agency from an email forwarded by her sister, who worked for the same council. She had gone on to attend an interview for a different job with the same council (the one she had previously left), and, instead, had been offered an opportunity to join their new council agency. Figure 15 (p.124) attempts to capture some of the complexity of the intermediary system, listed as an example of a social and public sector intermediary system.

FIGURE 15 SOCIAL AND PUBLIC SECTOR INTERMEDIARY SYSTEM (TYPE FOUR (A))



Source: Harriet's story

Finally, early exposure to online agency vacancies through job search platforms set direction towards contracting, but only in the short-term. A more general IT recruitment site, recommended by Dawn's brother, enabled her to identify the employment consultant regularly posting NHS IT contracts in her NHS region. The employment consultant had established excellent relationships with NHS regional managers requiring NHS IT consultants. After establishing her credentials with the same employment consultant, Dawn managed to remain in continuous contracting, presented in the extract below:

Extract from Dawn Story Three

Kim is the most influential employment consultant at Agency H for analyst contracts with X Regional NHS Trust, Dawn described her in the following way:

Interview two: *Anyway, I'd heard about this woman in Agency H [Author: Kim] who has a constant recruitment requirement within X Region, and she got me the job.*

And later in the interview:

... Kim said I'm putting you forward for this job and I've put your CV in so then she rings me back and says actually he might interview you, are you available? Yes, so OK, he's

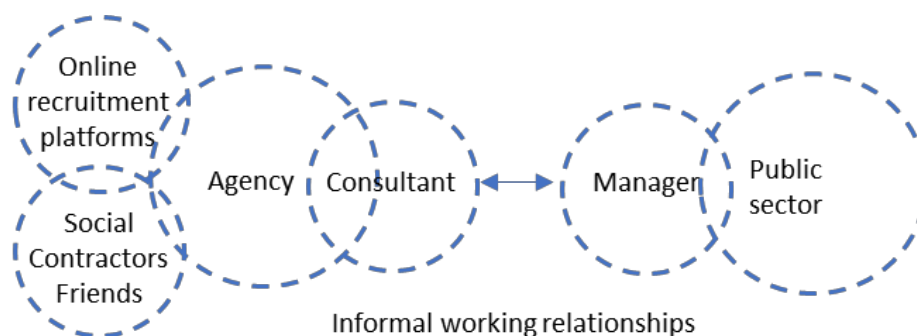
going to ring you at 10:30. Well I sat and looked at the clock at 10:30 and he rang actually on 10.30 and then he said, "Well I can see you have done loads of analysis from your CV". I can't get in can I [Author: get into NHS analyst work] well I have done it as well but not proper, what I call proper and uhhm, but he said "What I really want is someone to talk to the clinicians",, and I thought that's me!

...In interview two, Dawn described having a month off between contracts and then making a phone call to three agencies (the invisible NHS recruitment system). She then secured an NHS contract the day of the phone call.

Validated by Dawn

Equally, once Ruth and Eleanor contacted a well-connected employment consultant, they did not return to either initial referrers (social intermediaries) or online job search platforms (market intermediaries). Figure 16 (p.125) below, captures agency employment consultants' informal relationships with public sector managers for the supply of compliance checked professionals.

FIGURE 16 MARKET AND PUBLIC SECTOR INTERMEDIARY SYSTEM (TYPE TWO (D))



Source: Ruth, Dawn and Eleanor

Additional setting direction influences included the influence of professional bodies, agencies and limited company status. These influences were also found to act as

accommodation influences, and are addressed more fully in the following subsection, focusing on the accommodations required to adjust to this type of transition.

To sum up, setting direction influences included past compromised pension contributions, bias in the visible recruitment system, control over job locations, strong occupational identities, help from family members in contracting, early exposure to agency vacancies on job search platforms, and three different intermediary systems. These intermediary systems included the following: family as contractors encouraging and sustaining contracting (market and social intermediary system: Type 3); family as public sector employees encouraging a return to public sector organisations via a converted human resources department into an agency (social and public sector intermediary system: Type 4) and informal relationships between agency employment consultant and public sector managers sustaining ongoing contracting (market and public sector intermediary system: Type 2). All three intermediary systems were involved in setting direction toward agency contracting and sustaining contracting.

4.2.4 Accommodation influences

Participants' analytical stories also described influences supporting them with accommodating to transitions, colour coded orange on the STF map. Findings revealed how transitions to contractor status required several different accommodations. These included taking personal and financial responsibility for professional development, accommodating to the Government's new IR35 requirements, accommodating to different payment systems, delivering more flexible hours, adjusting identity from professional to contractor, working outside areas of professional expertise, and, finally, accepting feelings of being an outsider, and these are presented in more detail next.

Starting with learning to accommodate to paying for training. As mentioned earlier, Dawn had described scrolling through more general online IT recruitment platforms and discovering a particular IT skill shortage. After her temporary employee contract had come to an end, she had invested family savings in training to acquire the same skill, via a private training provider. After listing the skill on her CV, she quickly attracted the attention of a significantly well-connected agency employment consultant.

All five women had also referred to accommodating to the Government's IR35 requirements, aimed at addressing disguised employment for tax avoidance purposes (see Chapter Two for a more detailed outline of the policy). For example, Harriet mentioned how the council temp agency had warned her that she would have to change contract every six months, or intermittently take time out of contracting work to ensure compliance with IR35. Dawn and Eleanor talked about the different ways they could prove they were not employees, and Ruth referred to how IR35 had reduced her pay. Her agency had been offsetting IR35 costs through her salary and her school's agency fee. The need to accommodate to different payment systems, umbrella or limited company, and the impact of IR35, has already been noted above and will be discussed further, in the next subsection, when discussing lock influences.

Both Eleanor and Ruth were keen to work part-time and synchronise more free time with their contracting husbands but contracting had proved more inflexible than expected. Instead, they were working more hours than anticipated; for example, Ruth had worked monthly blocks of full-time hours that had become extremely tiring. All participants referred to feeling afraid to decline offers of contracting work in case no further offers were made.

Ruth and Eleanor also described compromising on the quality of their work. For example, Eleanor had been working on a hospital ward for which she had no previous experience, and Ruth had been teaching a Year 4 class when she had only been trained as a reception year teacher. These experiences ran counter to their sense of professionalism; however, accommodations were made by drawing on contractor identity rather than professional identity.

Participants also referred to having to accommodate to feelings of being outsiders or second-class workers. Eleanor had felt humiliated when she had needed to collect permanent staff signatures to prove her attendance. Dawn had drawn on her brother's story of contractor and 'permies' to cope with feelings of being left out, described in more detail below.

Extract from Dawn Story Three

Interview three: ...*I've been in a room, no one's spoken – is that normal [Brother] "Yeah that's fine, that's what you are you know."*

[Author: quotes her brother's advice]

Interview three: ... *You're earning, you're possibly earning more money than all these other people. So what he's said [Brother], in one of the big banking places somewhere when he was working, he said that the "Permies" will all sit all over there and the "Contractors", you'll be over there - they will be introduced, come in sit down – right, Contractors sit there, Permies sit over there, and they don't, they don't talk. Yes, it is a thing...yeah, yeah, yeah! Well I mean, I'm learning from him, he's saying that.*

Validated by Dawn

To sum up, accommodations included taking personal and financial responsibility for professional development, accommodating to the Government's new IR35 requirements, accommodating to different payment systems including becoming a limited company, delivering more flexible hours, working outside areas of professional expertise and accepting feelings of being an outsider. Support with making these accommodations came from memories of being unable to access jobs through the visible recruitment system, fear of agencies not offering further work, family offering reassurances that contractors are outsiders, displacing professional identity with contractor identity - to cope with delivering work beyond professional expertise and the support of agency employment consultants.

4.2.5 Lock influences

Analytical stories also revealed examples of several influences simultaneously configured to sustain or hold a change. Participant stories revealed examples of locking influences to include agency rules, compliance requirements, avoidance of the rigours of visible recruitment systems, tacit level agency threats and payment systems; these are coloured red in the STF. Further analysis of these locks also revealed two further intermediary systems: one locking professionals into contracting and the other acting as a lock into a limited company/personal service company employment status. The section starts by analysing and presenting lock influences and notes intermediary system involvement along the way.

In the second interview, Ruth validated her understanding of three agency rules locking her into contract work. The first agency rule was the impossibility of returning to an employer after working for them as a contractor, given the employer's risk of agency introduction fees. By the third interview, Ruth's agency had placed her in all her local schools and, given she had no intention of relocating, she perceived herself as locked out of employee opportunities and permanently

locked into contracting. The second rule was that agencies needed to know her availability at all times, excluding opportunities for working outside the agency. The third rule was that she was not to talk about work with any head teachers, undermining any opportunity to negotiate her way into an employee role. The extract below evidences her understanding of these rules and their consequences.

Extract from Ruth Story Two

In interview one, Ruth's plan was to identify the nice schools, through agency placements, and then circumvent the agency to contract with them directly. Finding nice schools was part of her plan to remain in work for longer because they were less energy intensive. In interview one this seemed to be working out:

Interview one: ...that's just really how I started and then once I worked in schools, when I worked on supply at some schools I asked them if I could work with them directly and a couple of them have let me so it's better.

By interview two, Ruth has learned the agency rule that blocks this strategy. Any negotiations for work that circumvents the agency is now classed as "dodgy" - she would not dare:

Interview two: Yes, it's something like two or three thousand pounds if the agency has introduced you to the school and then you circumvent them. It's very dodgy.

In interview two, Ruth was only working with one agency so felt obliged to keep the others informed. She may need them in the future, as she stated in her own words:

Interview two:

Ruth: Yes, so I've got to keep them sweet really.

Interviewer: So juggle three and keep them all happy?

Ruth: Well I can't at the moment, I can't do any work for the others, but I have just explained the situation and they seem to be all right, so fingers crossed.

Ruth has really enjoyed working with the current school and, ideally, would have liked to carry on but had learned the rule that the agency worker does not ask the school Head for more work. She has to be asked, as outlined below:

Interview two: *I'm not going to mention it to the head but if she mentions it to me then I would obviously, if she said to me could you work two days with the agency?*

Validated by Ruth

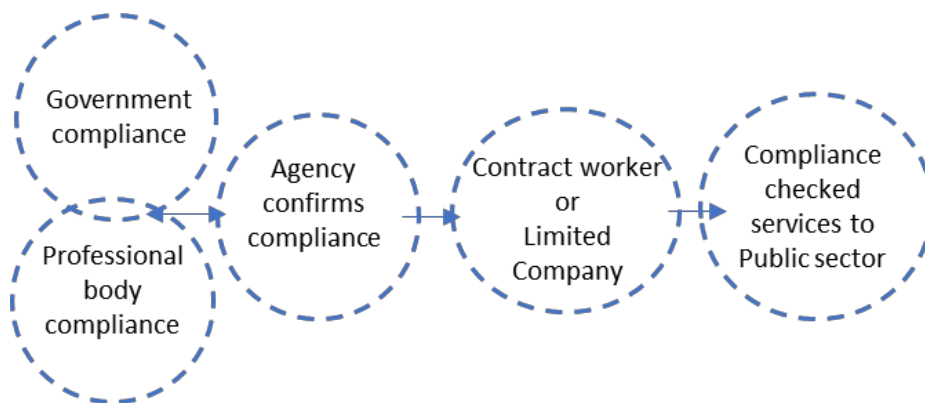
Ruth, Eleanor and Dawn's transition stories also revealed the locking influence of compliance requirements. Eleanor (occupational therapist) and Ruth's (teacher) professional compliance requirements had been laid out by Government and their professional bodies. For example, both women needed to pass Government Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and prove membership of their respective professional bodies for which entry qualifications, and relevant continuous professional development (CPD)²⁶ training, had needed to be checked. Given the litigious risks associated with compliance, Eleanor believed the NHS and Social Services would have been unwilling to recruit outside her agency's confirmation of compliance, as she stated:

I'd still struggle to win contracts with the NHS and Social Services, the point being is that they won't take individuals on like that because of all the compliance, and that's what they're stuck with...which in some ways, is a bit of a shame, 'cause they're not always getting the best and they're paying more for it. (Eleanor transcript data from interview three)

²⁶ Certain professions, including teachers, are required to maintain evidence of continuous personal development (CPD) of knowledge and skills for example in teaching these are outlined in the Government's Standards for Teachers' Professional Development – see <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standard-for-teachers-professional-development> Accessed 8th January 2019

The same compliance risk would have applied to Ruth and, to a lesser extent, Dawn, Beth and Harriet. Figure 17 (p.132) depicts the agency compliance check as part of an intermediary system lock.

FIGURE 17 MARKET AND PUBLIC SECTOR INTERMEDIARY SYSTEM (TYPE TWO (E))



Source: Eleanor, Dawn, Ruth

The rigors of the visible recruitment system have already been evidenced by Dawn and Harriet to be extremely fatiguing. It is not surprising, therefore, that many public sector employers, under significant workload pressure, might have sought to circumvent such a system by engaging with intermediary systems. The point was evidenced when Ruth described the head teacher's reluctance to employ her directly, despite IR35 costs, mainly because of both agency introduction fees and the time required to recruit her through the formal interview process.

Further locks seemed to operate at more tacit levels, to some extent, acting as low-level threats. For example, Harriet had felt unable to decline a contract in case the agency stopped offering her contracts. In the same way, Ruth accepted ever-

increasing blocks of full-time hours, despite her earlier preference for part-time hours, just in case there were no further offers of work, as stated:

Interview three: *...sometimes I don't do five days. It has happened a couple of times. Well more than that it has happened three or four times at least...It's bearable I can cope. The only thing is I want to follow my particular interests, as you know...* (Ruth transcript data from interview three)

Finally, reasons for Eleanor, Beth and Dawns' change of employment status, from contract worker to limited company, were based on agency pressures to adopt a particular payment system. For example, Eleanor's agency had presented her with two payment system options: being paid through an umbrella company or a limited company supported by an accountant. In Eleanor's second interview, she had described the umbrella company encouraging her to claim for inappropriate tax refunds, for example travel to work and lunch. The umbrella company had also engaged with HMRC on her behalf, without her permission, to arrange an early tax rebate. These negative experiences of umbrella companies led to distrust, contributing to Eleanor, Beth and Dawn's decisions to adopt limited company status instead.

Remaining with payment systems, the Civil Service required Beth to adopt limited company status to contract through an agency listed as compliant with the Framework for Contingent Labour list. This was described by her as an intermediary, as she states:

They are intermediaries because I think there are about a dozen of these intermediaries that sit holding contracts as part of the Framework For Contingent Labour that Government accesses and all they do is harvest people that Government wants to work

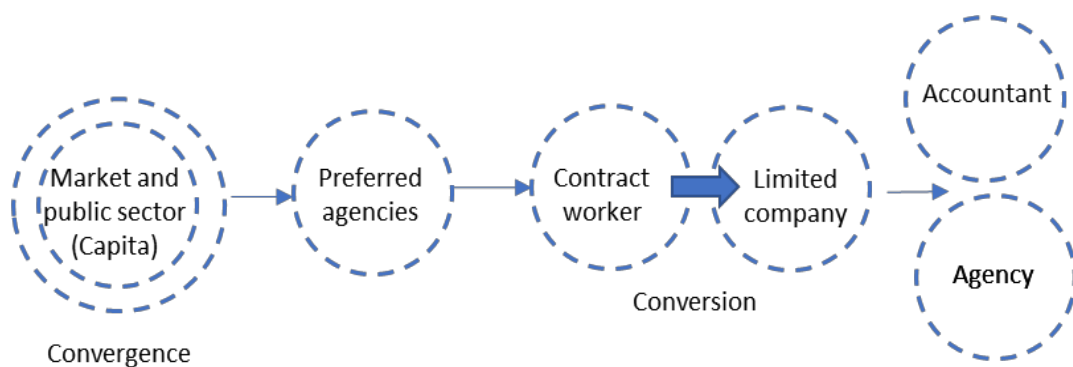
with and act as an intermediate contractor so that they can buy you because work doesn't have to be competed for then because the intermediary has already got on to this framework. It is purely a purchasing device for Government, but these people are taking a fee. Every day they book, they add £35 on for themselves - for nothing, absolutely nothing (Beth transcript data from interview three)

Furthermore, she described a further intermediary tier that had consolidated her payment arrangement by dealing with her billing:

...In fact, above them is another intermediary, Capita, who consolidate the whole thing and so Capita actually have the billing system, so my intermediary is not even doing that... (Beth transcript data from interview three)

Figure 18, below, attempts to capture Beth's description of this intermediary system.

FIGURE 18 MARKET AND PUBLIC SECTOR INTERMEDIARY SYSTEM (TYPE TWO (B))



Source: Beth

To sum up, participants' stories have revealed locking influences as agency rules, compliance requirements, avoidance of the rigours of visible recruitment systems,

tacit level agency threats and payment systems. Further analysis of these locks revealed two intermediary systems: one locking professionals into contracting and the other locking them into working for agencies as limited companies. These again are also listed in Chapter Seven, Table 14 (p.218).

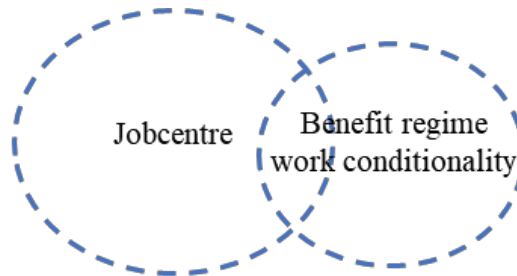
4.2.6 Absent influences

Upon resigning, Harriet had received no career planning or financial advice, and turned to a Jobcentre for help. She described the experience as horrible, bureaucratic and not geared up to her needs, as stated below:

Interview two: *It's horrible [Author: Jobcentre] ... Why is it so painful [laughs]? So bureaucratic? I don't know. I'd like to sort them out [laughs]...they don't seem to be particularly geared up for people in their 50s with lots of experience, so they expect you to go for everything and anything, so ... I shouldn't moan, really.* (Harriet transcript data from interview two)

Figure 19 (p.136) represents the Jobcentre as a traditional careers and education intermediary. In Harriet's case, an intermediary that missed the opportunity to support her with impartial advice and guidance. Later on, in Chapter Five, Kate will describe how the Jobcentre led her to accept her first job offer, leading to feelings of being locked into unsatisfactory work. Far from sensing the job as a missed opportunity, Harriet may have had a lucky escape.

FIGURE 19 TRADITIONAL CAREERS AND EDUCATION INTERMEDIARY SYSTEM (TYPE SIX (B))



Source: Harriet

None of the research participants mentioned seeking or receiving any impartial careers advice to support them with career planning.

4.2.7 Summary of findings

To summarise, this section has contributed three key findings. Firstly, a number of participants' stories had all seemed to follow similar patterns. They started with descriptions of challenging public sector working conditions, followed by exits from employee contracts, then engagement with intermediary systems (and passing compliance checks), and ending with returns to public sector organisations: a public sector revolving door transition. As participants went through the revolving door, their employment status changed from employee to agency contractor and then, for some, on to limited company status whilst continuing to contract through the same market and public sector intermediary systems.

Secondly, transition, setting direction, accommodation, and lock influences, including those of intermediary systems, had all played their part in shaping these revolving door transitions. A number of intermediary systems were implicated in

these transitions (also collated in Chapter Seven, Table 14, p.218), and these are bulleted as follows:

- *A market and public sector intermediary system*, involving:
 - intersections between agency and umbrella companies, which led to conversions from contract worker to limited company status in efforts to escape umbrella company payment systems (Type 2 (a));
 - public sector organisations only being able to hire from agencies confirming compliance checks (e.g. a lock influence), which resulted in both setting direction and lock influences, creating an invisible recruitment practice informal interaction between an agency employment consultant and public sector manager (Type 2 (d));
 - agency contracting through public sector organisations requirements for compliance checked professional workers, removing opportunity to contract outside agency control (Type 2 (e));
 - contractors to assume limited company status in order to contract through an agency listed as being compliant with the Government's Framework for Contingent Labour, which create a clear lock influence (Type 2 (b)).
- *A market and social intermediary system* (Type 3 (a)) in which family and friends, already working as agency contractors, had set direction towards similar contracting work.
- *A social and public sector intermediary system* (Type 4 (a)) in which a sister and also a council employee, encouraged the participant to return to her ex council employer via their recent HR department's conversion to an agency, setting direction to agency contracting.
- *A traditional careers and education intermediary*, a Jobcentre (Type 6 (b)) and although presented as a single intermediary, is later referenced in other intermediary systems (see Type 6 (c and d)).

Thirdly, participants described needing to make various accommodations to becoming contractors. These accommodations included following agency rules, accepting feelings of being outsiders, displaced professional identity to cope with compromising their professionalism, taking financial responsibility for professional training and development, working more flexible hours than desired, and adjusting to new payment systems that included paying for accountancy services and IR35 costs. Such accommodations would have benefitted intermediary systems, public sector managers and public sector organisations.

4.3 RELUCTANT EMPLOYEES OR SUBJECTIVE TRANSITIONS

This section draws on Joanne and Fiona's stories, of reluctantly remaining in their public sector jobs to illustrate how various influences came to shape their subjective transitions. The section pays particular attention to the role played by intermediaries in shaping this type of transition.

4.3.1 Stories of transition: reluctant employees and subjective transitions

Joanne and Fiona had fully expected to leave their public sector employee jobs only to find themselves held back. Both remained in public sector employee contracts whilst subjectively transitioning from once being passionate about their work to counting down the days to leaving. Joanne, an NHS manager in her early sixties, and Fiona, a local government partnership manager in her late fifties, reflected on, similar, past domestic and paid work transitions. Early in their careers, they had taken time out of work to raise children until they had reached school age. They both had early experiences of divorce and gone on to assume financial responsibility for their families, with Joanne remarrying later on. Both had invested time, energy and

had 'gone the extra mile' for their long-term public sector employers. They had loved their work and been promoted into senior management positions. More recently, however, a change in working conditions had resulted in rising levels of work-related stress and a change in attitude towards work.

Evidence of this subjective change in attitude towards work is captured in Joanne's transcript data below. In her first interview she describes how work had been her life:

...it's been my life you know and some people go to work and they think of it as work and they wouldn't care if they walked out the door and never went back. I feel it's more for me, it's the relationship with people, the relationships you build up and I feel its kind of integration in my life (Joanne Transcript interview one)

By her third interview, after returning from sick leave to address her depression, she was ready to leave, as she stated below:

And it's just the, I don't know, it's just the pressure I think, and then getting up in the mornings thinking oh here we go another day in heaven or where ever you want to call it, but it's not easy... it does I think, I'm becoming more aware of the fact I really want to go. (Joanne Transcript interview three)

In her first interview, Joanne had stated that, ideally, she should already be retired. She had continued working because of the unexpected rise in her state pension age. At the time, she had been juggling paid work with taking care of her daughter and grandchildren, fully anticipating they would need her financial help soon. Given this financial risk, retiring without her state pension was impossible. Her daughter had been a single mother coping with a serious mental health condition whilst trying to care for two small children. Joanne's line manager had recommended partial retirement, giving her more time with her daughter and grandchildren, and relieving

some of her stress. Joanne had dismissed the idea because any change of contract, necessary to move into partial retirement, would have compromised the security of her current employee contract. By her second interview, she had taken more time off work to support her daughter and grandchildren. In the third interview she had just returned from sick leave, needed to address a decline in her own mental health. During her sick leave, she had decided that she would retire despite her financial risks.

In Fiona's case, her older children were still living with her at home. She had been less concerned, than Joanne, about the delay to her state pension. Even with early access penalties, she had calculated that she could just about live off her occupational pension, despite the delay to her state pension. Her plan was to draw on her voluntary redundancy money to bridge the gap in her finances, incurred by accessing her occupational pension too early. Ideally, any outstanding money would be used to pay to return to study or retrain. Unfortunately, from the point of arranging the first interview to meeting face-to-face, she had been informed that her application for voluntary redundancy had been turned down; the news had been devastating. In the second interview, she described how she was exploring her career options and had enrolled on a 'preparing for undergraduate study' programme at the local university. By the third interview, she had just received news of yet another round of council restructuring and was thinking about applying for a job in the Third Sector. The idea had been prompted by mention, in the council's restructuring talk, of her council service being taken over by a charity.

To sum up, these accounts represent examples of participants expecting to exit public sector jobs and then finding themselves having to carry on working. The influences shaping these transitions are outlined in more detail next.

4.3.2 Influences and intermediaries

In Fiona's first interview she had described her efforts to generate new career ideas, in preparation for leaving her job. She had spoken to a further education college careers adviser, placed the key words 'unusual jobs' in Google's search engine and visited a university open day for a chat with one of their advisers. By her second interview, she had enrolled and paid for her local university's ten-week course, preparing her for undergraduate study. Figure 20 captures Fiona's description of university as an intermediary system.

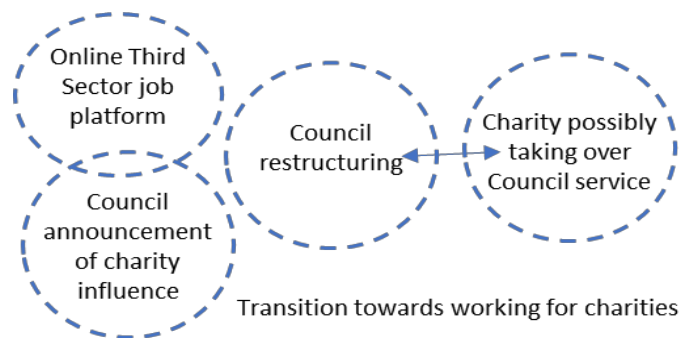
FIGURE 20 TRADITIONAL CAREERS AND EDUCATION INTERMEDIARY SYSTEM (TYPE SIX (E))



Source: Fiona

Towards the end of contact with Fiona, she had gone on to describe developing a new interest in an online platform advertising Third Sector (charity) jobs. By the third interview, she had visited the platform and found jobs similar to the role she was delivering for the Council. Furthermore, in a recent council newsletter there had been reference to a charity taking over the Children's Centres, the service she had been managing. An attempt to represent the start of a charity and public sector intermediary system's setting direction towards Fiona's return to the public sector, via a charity, is captured in Figure 21 (p.142), next.

FIGURE 21 CHARITY AND PUBLIC SECTOR INTERMEDIARY (TYPE FIVE (B))



Source: Fiona

By her third interview, Fiona was toying with both ideas of undergraduate study and or applying to work for a charity. Ideally, she would have benefitted from impartial careers advice, so information about the National Careers Services was passed on to her.

4.3.3 Summary of findings

Both Joanne and Fiona were subject to similar influences: they had been financially responsible for their families; had benefitted from long term job tenures; they had both been subject to an unexpected raised state pension age; and both were coping with evermore challenging public sector working conditions. Joanne was also subject to the further influence of potentially needing to financially support her older daughter and grandchildren. It was her daughter's precarious circumstances that led Joanne to delay retiring, at least until receipt of her state pension. In contrast, Fiona, with no such responsibilities, had just wanted to do something different hence revealing further intermediary systems. The first had been a traditional careers and education intermediary system (Type 6 (e)) that had led her to transition into paying for a 'preparing for university' course. The second intermediary system had been a charity and public sector intermediary (Type 5 (b)) with setting direction influence towards delivering her public sector service through a charity.

4.4 RELOCATORS

The final of the eight transitions, was Sarah and her husband's experience of relocating. A further two participants in the research referenced relocating, however, only Sarah went on to relocate and then transition into a public sector employee role. Her story, along with the influence of an intermediary system, is presented next.

4.4.1 A story of transition: relocators

In her first interview, Sarah had only just been made redundant from a public sector, full-time, employee contract. She had gone on to join a private organisation, delivering similar university education work. At the same time, her husband's public sector job was being subject to another round of restructuring: potentially resulting in his redundancy. In the interval between our first and second interviews, she and her husband had downsized, and relocated nearer to London, to reduce travelling time to her new job. The relocation also positioned her husband closer to a more vibrant job market, just in case he was made redundant. Two days after her first interview, her private sector education company had been taken over by a new company. The company had asked her to commercialise her private professional contacts to sell more online courses: ethically impossible for her. Shortly afterwards, her new manager had informed her that she had failed her six-month probationary period.

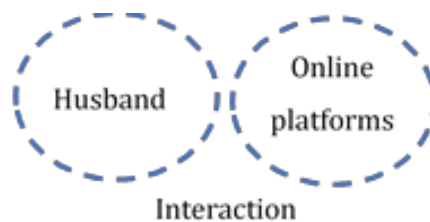
From her second to third interviews, Sarah had drawn heavily on online job search engines to search for new jobs. In the meantime, her husband had helped her identify universities within travelling distance, checked their online vacancy pages and coached her through a number of job applications and interview opportunities. He was a major influence in helping her decide which university offers to accept. She had gone on to accept the employee contract offering the most job security, the least stressful mode of travel and the minimum amount of management responsibility –

in that order of priority. The influences shaping Sarah and her husband's relocation are presented next.

4.4.2 Influences and an intermediary system

Sarah's husband was the driving force behind their relocation and her second transition. He had acted as a social intermediary system with transition influence in four different ways. Firstly, he had drawn on online platforms to support her with finding a new home nearer London. Secondly, he had used the internet to identify universities she could comfortably commute to. Thirdly, he had regularly checked their vacancy web pages to identify relevant vacancies, on her behalf. By doing so, they had discovered that university website vacancy pages were more accurate than the larger meta job search engines, thereby reducing her competition. Fourthly, and finally, by coaching her through application and interview processes, he had helped her obtain a number of university job offers and supported her with deciding which offer to accept. His role as an intermediary system with transition influence is captured in Figure 22.

FIGURE 22 SOCIAL INTERMEDIARY SYSTEM (TYPE ONE (B))



Source: Sarah

Sarah's husband's influence on her transition is described as an intermediary system because of his strategic use of online job search platforms.

4.4.3 Summary of findings

To reiterate, Sarah and her husband relocated nearer to London to address their concerns about future job insecurity. Sarah's husband's use of online resources had acted as a social intermediary system with transition influence both in relocating and transitioning her into a further permanent employee contract. At this point, it is worth referencing a further participant's relocation experience in the opposite direction, from London to the Midlands. As a result of experiencing chronic job insecurity, in a London based public sector organisations, Kaz and her husband had sold their property to invest their family financial capital into a property business based in the Midlands. Their account is presented in their Appendix 9 analytical story (see Kaz, Appendix 9 (pp.294 -296)) and will go on to be summarised in Chapter Five.

4.5 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER FINDINGS

This chapter has illustrated how all participants had reflected on the way their public sector working conditions had become more challenging. Despite undergoing various transitions, however, they continued to deliver the same or similar senior management, professional or niche services to public sector organisations. For many it was in the same organisation where they had previously worked as employees. Participants' experiences of transitions included entering a public sector revolving door with changes in employment status, reluctantly remaining in the same public sector job and experiencing a subjective transition, and for one participant, relocating. By, drawing on the STF map for revolving door transitions, influences shaping their transition can be discerned. Significantly, the STF map also identified the influence of several types of intermediary system. These intermediary systems were found to have similar transition, setting direction, accommodation and lock influence on transition patterns. These intermediary systems are collated and

presented in Chapter Seven, Table 14 (p.218) and their influences in Table 15 (p.225).

The research has shown that participants engaging with market based intermediary systems needed to make several accommodations. These included following agency rules, accepting feelings of being a contractor outsider, displacing professional identity to cope with compromising their professionalism, taking financial responsibility for professional training and development, working more flexible hours than desired, and, in some cases, adjusting to new payment systems that had included paying for accountancy services and IR35 costs. These accommodations would have benefitted both intermediary systems, public sector managers and their public sector organisations. Intermediary systems would have financially gained by holding and supplying 'just in time' contractors. Public sector managers would have benefitted from bypassing lengthy recruitment processes to gain 'just in time' compliance checked contractors and public sector organisations would have benefitted from only paying for services as and when needed, not being responsible for paying for training, and not having to cover sick pay, holiday pay, pension or national insurance contributions (see Appendix 3 (p.273)) for more detail on different treatments of various employment status.

Finally, it is evident that participants often engaged with more than one type of intermediary system during their transitions. For instance, Fiona, a reluctant public sector employee, engaged with two intermediary systems. The first, a traditional careers and education intermediary system (Type 6 (e)) that had led her to transition into a 'preparing for university' course. The university intermediary had financially benefitted from Fiona paying fees for her 'preparing for university' course. The second intermediary system was identified as a charity and public sector intermediary (Type 5 (b)) with setting direction influence towards delivering her public sector service through a charity. Such an intermediary system would have

resulted in financial savings for Fiona's council employer. A further example was of Sarah and her husband, relocating nearer to London to address future job insecurity. Sarah's husband had used online resources to both support their relocation and her transition into her a public sector employee contract. As such he was identified as a social intermediary system (Type 1 (b)) with transition influence into further employee contracts. In some respects, their decision to relocate and focus on searching for job vacancies on the university/employer website circumvented market based intermediary systems and may have contributed to Sarah being able to access an employee contract. Furthermore, their relocation had been helpful in acting as a contingency plan, buffering them against the risk of her husband being made redundant.

To conclude, it would appear that public sector organisations were responding to Government demands for financial cuts and savings in a variety of ways; for example, making a number of employees redundant (both voluntary and compulsory) whilst retaining some employees and casualising others. Participants entering the revolving door were forced to engage with market and public sector intermediary systems and change their employment status, sometimes twice. As Chapter Two revealed, changes in employment status, from employee to other forms, although beneficial to organisations and intermediary systems were disadvantageous to low income earners. Stories of reluctant public sector employees and the couple relocating have revealed further intermediary systems that would have benefitted from their transitions. For example, Fiona's Council would have made savings, especially if she had been engaged by a charity based intermediary system. Sarah's husband would also have benefitted from their relocation nearer to London, acting as an insurance against his own precarious public sector employment, a public sector organisation about to undergo another restructuring.

CHAPTER FIVE: TRANSITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC SECTOR: SIMPLE TO COMPLEX WORK

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Five presents the stories of five women who transitioned from similar, simple, public sector, employee contracts to engaging with more complex arrangements of work; this type of transition was labelled simple to complex work. Four of the stories are from women exiting public sector employee contracts in the occupational areas of social care, law enforcement and further education; the fifth story is from a participant exiting a private sector company that had been delivering a number of public sector services. It is notable that all the participants relied more heavily on traditional careers and education intermediary systems, and social intermediary systems, to access and manage these more complex arrangements of work.

The chapter, primarily, focuses on the three more typical transitions to draw out the influences and intermediary systems shaping the experience. The two more atypical experiences are only briefly outlined to ensure all possible intermediary systems are represented. As well as the atypical transition, already mentioned, the additional atypical transition involved a participant changing from one public sector employee job to another whilst, at the same time, learning to manage complex domestic work supporting members of her engaged in zero-hour contract work.

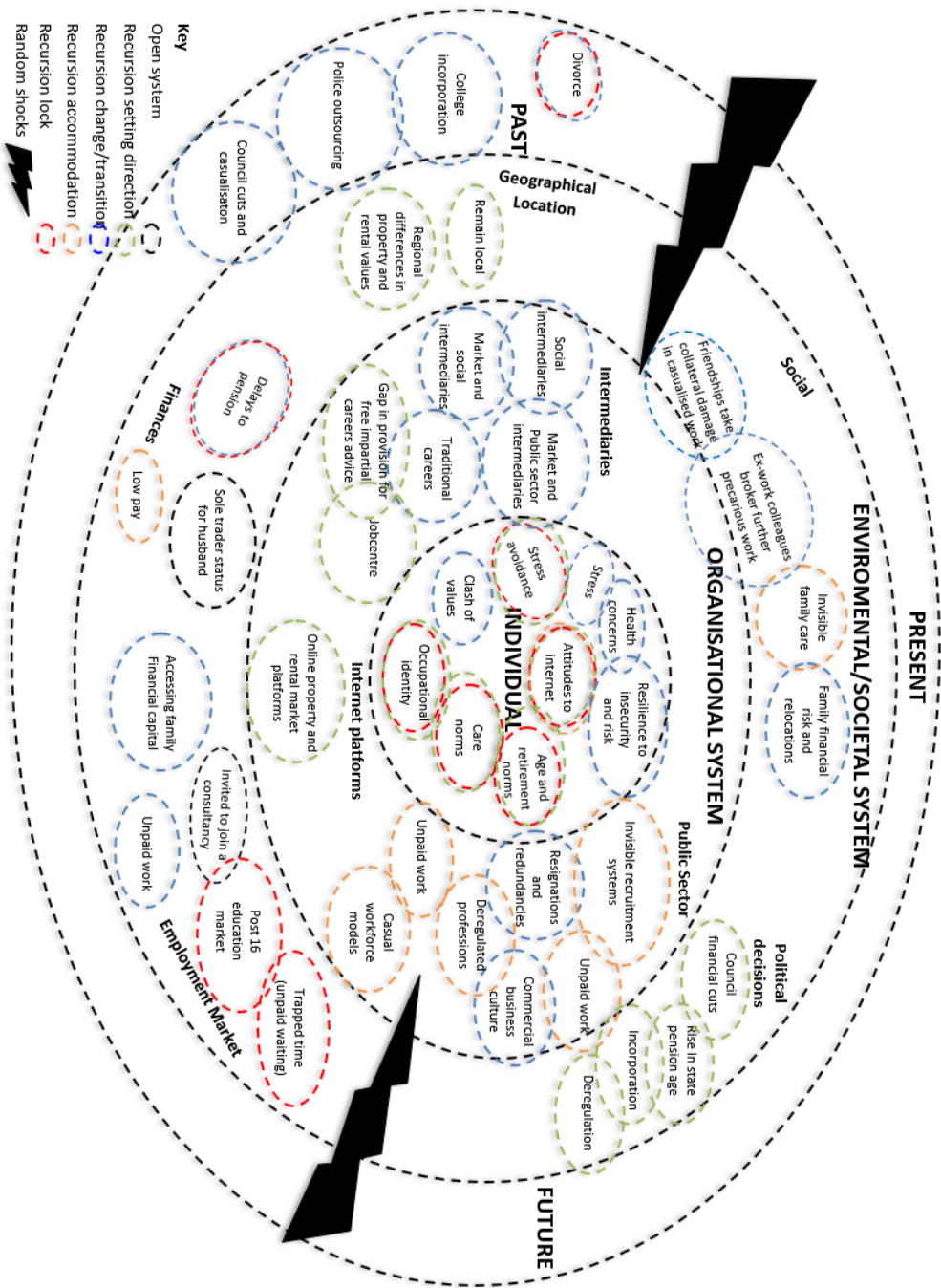
Similar to Chapter Four, the more typical stories of simple to complex were refined into analytical stories listed in Appendix 9 (pp.280-320). Influences noted in these analytical stories are presented in the STF of simple to complex transitions, presented in Figure 23 (p.150). This STF demonstrates an increasing confidence in recognising intermediaries; for example, the influences arising from Kaz's analytical

story (pp. 294-296) of family financial risk and relocation, accessing family financial capital, regional differences in property and rental values, and online rental market platforms are identified as a market and social intermediary system (Type 3 (b)) in Table 14 (p.218).

Overall, the analytical stories and STF for this pattern of transition illustrate how intermediary systems influenced these participants' transitions, in the context of wider transition, setting direction, accommodation and lock influences. Of note were the significant accommodations required to adjust to a complex working pattern. These included providing more unpaid market work in repeated efforts to gain contracts, converting social relationships into social intermediary systems, learning to manage complex working arrangements, and, in one case, risking family financial capital to launch a new property business.

This chapter's findings are presented in three sections: the first offers a brief overview of the participants' transitions; the second draws on influences shaping more typical transitions; the third notes additional intermediary systems revealed by the more atypical participants; and the final section summarises the chapter's findings and conclusions.

FIGURE 23 SYSTEM THEORY FRAMEWORK MAP (STF) OF SIMPLE TO COMPLEX WORK



5.2 SIMPLE TO COMPLEX WORK

The section presents five stories of women transitioning from the public sector to juggling multiple contracts, many of which remained in the public sector. It illustrates how various influences shaped this kind of transition and the role played by intermediary systems.

5.2.1 Stories of transition: Simple to complex work

All five participants started their interviews by reflecting on past marriages, time out of work to raise children and, in some cases, divorces. They then went on to talk about their recent experiences of change in public sector work, which included being outsourced and commercialised (expected to generate income for the organisation). In one case, a husband's public sector organisation had been preparing for privatisation. At the same time, participants described coping with public sector working conditions becoming more challenging, leading to rising levels of stress, which, for some, impacted on their health. Drawing on both interview transcripts, interview stories and their more detailed analytical stories (presented in Appendix 9), the section briefly outlines what happened to them during the research.

Samantha, in her early sixties, had previously been a further education lecturer. Her earlier computing career had ended after marriage. Once her children had gone to school, she had returned to work as a further education lecturer and had appreciated being in paid work after her divorce. She recalled starting to feel insecure about her job around the time of the college's incorporation²⁷. In the first interview, she had

²⁷ The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 released Further Education Colleges from Local Authority control

described the traumatic events leading up to her voluntary redundancy and then her transition into a more chaotic pattern of work. This work had included all of the following: two to three days a week assessment work for a private education provider (a permanent contract); delivering assessment work one day a week for her local town council (a temporary contract); teaching one day a week for a further education college that had further subcontracted her to a community organisation (a temporary agency contract); and one day a week caring for her grandchild at home, enabling her daughter to return to work (unpaid work).

In the second interview, she had been devastated by being made redundant again, this time from her only permanent contract. In addition, both temporary contracts had come to an end, but she had still felt unready to face the Jobcentre. In the third interview, she described how she had attended an Awarding Body's conference to pick up some summer assessing work. Her unpaid attendance had been a requirement of a 'possible' job offer. The job had involved portfolios being delivered to her home for assessment. She had discovered the time allocated for assessing each portfolio had been significantly underestimated, resulting in her pay being lower than the minimum wage. Furthermore, the portfolios around her home had felt an intrusion in her home life. She went on to explain that she was one of the WASPI women (Women Against State Pension Inequality) and had been surprised at the unexpected delay to both her occupational and state pensions. Ideally, she would have preferred to have stopped work, believing she should have been retired by now. Towards the end of the interview, she explained how she been to the GP to get help with managing her stress. Searching for work, juggling contracts, caring for her grandchild and arranging her daughter's wedding had all become overwhelming and medical intervention had been needed.

Moving on to Clare, after being TUPE'd²⁸ from the police force to a private commercial company, Clare's workload had become increasingly intolerable, and exposure to the new commercial culture even more stressful. Before submitting her resignation, she and her job coach had prepared an exit strategy that had involved priming several potential employment opportunities. By the second interview, she was delivering four contracts: a university tutoring contract (a part-time permanent contract); a casual exam invigilating contract; volunteering at a cultural heritage site (unpaid work supporting her job search); and a couple of days delivering school administrative support (an agency temporary casual contract). By her third interview, Clare had converted her volunteering work into a permanent casual contract, her agency contract into an employee maternity cover and planned to terminate her university tutoring contract, to manage her increasing level of fatigue.

Kaz, in her early fifties, had been a careers adviser and then Connexions worker and her husband had also been a public sector worker, and both had been based in London. After Connexions ended²⁹, she had been made redundant by her council and then returned as a casual worker to the Youth Offending Service. Meanwhile, her husband had been going through rounds of restructuring in preparation for the privatisation of his public sector organisation. Kaz believed her high levels of stress was a contributing factor in her health crisis, requiring a long stay in hospital. During her convalescence, Kaz and her family developed a plan for change. They decided to draw on the family's financial capital to relocate and start a property and rental business in the Midlands. In the first interview, she was helping her husband manage the business, doing much of the domestic work, caring for her school age child and

²⁸ TUPE stands for Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) see <http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1655> [accessed December 6th, 2018]

²⁹ The Education Act 2011 transferred the duty to 'secure access to independent careers guidance' for pupils and students from Council Connexions Services to schools (from September 2012 for pupils aged 14 to age 16), and then from September 2013 upon schools for pupils aged 13-18 and upon FE Colleges and Sixth Form Colleges for students aged 16-18. <https://www.careersengland.org.uk/careers-guidance/> accessed 15.06.19

had just secured a part-time temporary contract as a college employment coach. In the second interview, although the contract had not been renewed, Kaz had found a second contract with a different college. By the third interview, she was renting out three houses and her recent temporary contract had converted into a permanent term time only contract, all whilst managing a household and caring for her family.

Rebecca was the only participant who had not previously been a public sector worker. She had, however, joined the study after self-identifying as a 'kind of' public sector worker. She had been the lead on apprenticeships for a large corporation and much of her work had involved partnerships with public sector organisations. After the company's take over, she had been made redundant. During the course of the research, her transition consisted of moving in with a friend and then renting out her home whilst signing on at the Jobcentre to claim benefit. The benefit claim had enabled her to draw down mortgage protection insurance. She had also been finishing off some corporate social responsibility work for her ex-company but had not planned to claim for the work until she had set up her own company: an intermediary business. Her plan had involved setting up a company to facilitate partnerships with public sector organisations, charities and private companies to submit bids for Government projects, all in the apprenticeship space. In delaying submitting her invoice to her ex-company, and then submitting it through her new company, she had known she would be placed on their preferred supplier list for niche corporate social responsibility projects. At the same time, she had enrolled on a university course in the hope of generating further networking opportunities and disguising her temporary unemployment.

Finally, Kate had never thought she would be giving up her job as a family and teenage pregnancy officer. Council working conditions, however, had become so intolerable she had felt there was no choice in accepting the voluntary redundancy offer: her health had depended on it. She had been unable to find similar jobs, so had

gone on to make a claim for benefits. A condition of claiming benefits had been to apply for any available job and to take the first offered: a doctor's surgery receptionist. As she explained, in her first job interview she had not realised the surgery had been piloting weekend working. In her second research interview, she had described how she had handed in her resignation letter the day after being put on the weekend rota. She had been particularly surprised at how emotionally detached she had felt about it all.

At the same time, Kate's husband's contracting work had involved him being away from home five days a week. As a consequence, she was expected to get everything ready for the weekend. In the first interview, she had also described how her adult son had needed to return home, making family life quite complicated. Her son had been unable to sustain his family's rent on a zero-hour contract and so he and his partner had returned to their respective parental homes. Her son had access to his child on weekends to enable his partner to work, however, sometimes the agency required him to work on weekends too: leaving Kate responsible for being the weekend childcare backup. By the third interview, Kate had picked up a second doctors receptionist job requiring no weekend work. The new job had allowed her to juggle the cleaning, shopping and food preparation through the week, freeing her weekends for seeing her husband and, possibly, caring for her grandchild.

To sum up, the section has presented five stories of transition from simple to complex work. Four of the stories, excluding Rebecca, had started with challenging public sector working conditions leading to exiting permanent employee contracts. Unlike the stories from participants in Chapter Four, these participants had no option of remaining in the public sector and no market and public sector intermediary system waiting to return them to the public sector. In contrast, they had transitioned into complex arrangements of paid and unpaid work. In Kate's case, complex arrangements of unpaid work that had been necessary to support her

family's complex contracting work patterns. The chapter now moves on to consider the types of influences shaping these transitions.

5.2.2 Transition influences

Samantha, Kaz and Clare had all recalled structural changes to their public sector organisations, followed by more challenging working conditions. For example, Samantha had remembered her college going through incorporation, Clare had been TUPE'd from the police to a private company and Kaz had remembered her Council announcing cuts in spending followed by a revolving door experience of a redundancy then returning to casual contracts. At the same time, Kaz's husband had been threatened with another round of restructuring, in preparation for the privatisation of his public sector organisation. In the aftermath, all three women's working conditions had become more challenging. The extract from Samantha's first story illustrates how these conditions had been experienced with similar accounts being provided by Clare and Kaz.

Extract from Samantha Story One

It is important to appreciate the slow grinding down of staff taking place in this FE college before Samantha had left. Every year staff were cut with a constant uncertainty that it might be you next. In her department they went from 12 to 3 or 4 [Author: numbers of lecturers], it was incredibly stressful. Then OFSTED added further stress by putting the college into a grade 3 context, requiring improvement...

Lots of new managers had been "swaggering" around from the new college...

...they took bits and pieces, they stripped people it was like, a bit like day light robbery, so people who had taught on particular courses that had built up a complete stash of materials, they were just asked to hand it all over.

Over the year, the newly merged college advertised new management jobs for outrageous salaries and invested thousands into a college refit, as she stated:

Outside the college there are two or three bins made of stainless steel, they were £16,000, that's bins. Inside the reception there was lighting from Italy errm, the stone slabs had apparently come from China... Absolutely obscene, obscene spending of money!

...

She had requested some software to support one of her students with additional needs with reading his computer screen and had been turned down... then a young girl had been brought in from College D and had been told to take over one of her particularly difficult classes. It was poorly managed leading to students getting upset and coming to see Samantha in a different class. The situation became out of control and, in exasperation, she had sworn in a meeting. She went home, and the Doctor signed her off with stress.

She came back to a college voluntary redundancy offer... She goes on to further describe how she had felt, “...manic, panic-stricken time”, and feeling, “...shell-shocked...it was as if they loaded the gun, put the gun to my head and said fire it!”.

Validated by Samantha

For all three women, a further transition influence had been concerns about the impact of public sector changes on their health. In the extract above, Samantha had mentioned getting signed off by her GP with stress. Clare had been coping with similar levels of stress combined with menopause symptoms and had wondered what the longer-term impact on her health would be. Reflecting back, Kaz, believed her work-related stress had left her vulnerable to catching pneumonia, requiring five months off work to convalesce.

A further transition influence had been pre-existing levels of financial security/insecurity. For Clare, buffered by her husband's salary, her wages had been viewed as money for family luxuries. In contrast, Samantha and Kaz's salary had been essential to the family economy. Samantha, a long-term single parent, had been trying to give her older children more financial support; for example, offering to pay for her daughter's up and coming wedding. Her unexpected two-year delay to accessing her occupational and state pensions had meant carrying on working when she had fully expected to be retired. Kaz and her husband had been subject to continuous chronic job insecurity whilst trying to pay hefty mortgage repayments on their London home. Their decision to relocate and start a rental business had been more about searching for financial security than any interest in becoming entrepreneurs, as stated below:

That's happened, we are quite happy where we are, you know we are not making loads of money; it's never been about making loads of money it's been about having security.
(Kaz, transcript data from interview three)

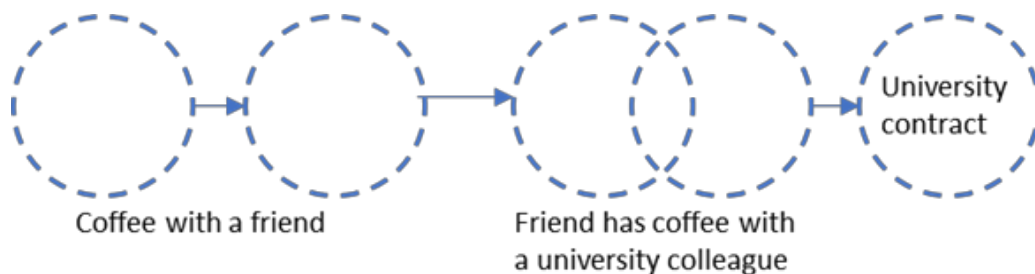
Kaz's third story illustrates her sources of income (family financial contributions, capital left over from downsizing and redundancy money) used to set up the family business. The story evidences the family's willingness to risk future pensions in the pursuit of relief from relentless family financial insecurity. For Kaz and her family, wellbeing had become, above all things, being free of the organisation's power to determine their financial security.

Intermediary systems had also acted as transition influences, falling into one of four groups: social, market and public sector, market and social, and traditional careers systems. Starting with social intermediaries, three ex-work colleagues, and various friends had gone on to help Samantha gain access to education contracts not

previously advertised. For example, one ex-work colleague had brokered a one day a week casual contract sorting out muddled portfolio assessments for a town council and another had brokered a permanent contract for two to three-days a week with a private training provider. Although, by the second interview, she had been made redundant again. Samantha's story illustrates the risks involved in relying on social intermediaries also in precarious work.

In the third interview, Clare had described the role of social intermediaries in various public sector invisible recruitment practices. Figure 24 that follows captures the structure of one such social intermediary system: coffee with a friend (interaction) and a friend's interaction with a fellow co-worker (intersection) that had led to a university contract.

FIGURE 24 SOCIAL INTERMEDIARY SYSTEM (TYPE ONE (A))



Source: Clare

The first two circles of Figure 24 represent the interaction between Clare and a friend; the second arrow shows the friend having coffee with her work colleague; she then interviews Clare and offers her a contract. Clare's reliance on social intermediary systems for access to more invisible opportunities also provides

evidence of some collateral damage to friendships. She had needed to create friend classifications: deep friends; invited home for dinner friends; and coffee contacts offering routes to jobs. In positioning, and being positioned, as a coffee contact, a potential friendship with an ex-boss came to an end, as she describes below:

...my old boss, she's left her job to become independent, and so was meeting me more to see what work she could get off me or could I work with her to get...you know, what was my contact list is like and I'm quite protective over my friend and colleagues. You know I'll always share wherever I can to get people work, but I thought no, I don't want her then badgering...I don't want that to ruin the relationship I have with my friends, but then suddenly the social side of her just dropped off really quickly. (Clare transcript data from interview three)

Moving on to market and public sector intermediary systems, Clare had identified national and local agencies, but it had been the local version that placed her in the first contract. She had deliberately put more effort into engaging with the local agency because she had only been prepared to work locally. She had primed the local agency in preparation for her leave date, as she describes below:

So, I went down about three or four months ago to say, you know I will be looking at leaving at some time can I put myself on your books and they said, "Oh, yes what sort of things do you want?" and we went through all of that and then I phoned them up about a month ago and said I am now definitely leaving and will be available from the 1st Jan... (Clare transcript data from interview Three)

The simple interaction between Clare and the agency and then being placed into a school is captured in Figure 25, below:

FIGURE 25 MARKET AND PUBLIC SECTOR INTERMEDIARY SYSTEM (TYPE TWO (F))



Source: Clare

Unfortunately, Samantha found herself nudged into more complex contracts after being rejected from school-based agencies. These agencies are described as market and public sector types and tended to furnish more regular and secure contracts to more rigorously compliance checked professionals, delivering statutory public sector services. An account of her experience is related in the following story:

Extract from Samantha Story Three

Samantha discovered that school-based agencies only support teachers with QTS or QTLS status and more general education agencies were not interested in her. Only one agency specialising in Post-16 Further Education Sector work, had signed her up. They went on to offer her one-day a week at College D who then further subcontracted her to do community-based teaching. When we met, Samantha had

already completed a contract to teach in a care home and was currently working for a Housing Trust.

By interview three, her work with College D had finished and the agency had told her there should be more work available in the next month, as she stated:

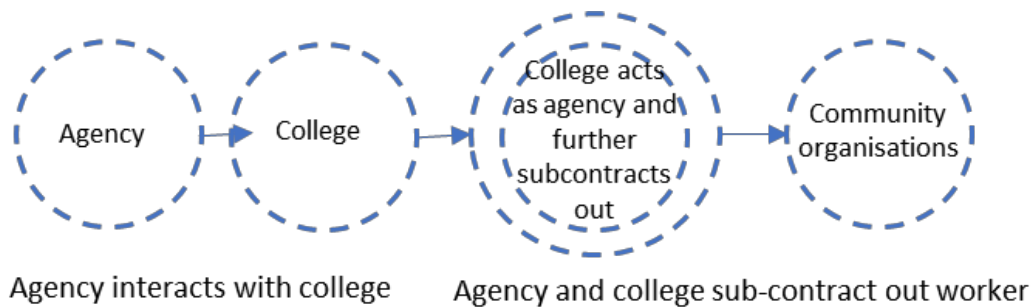
[Agency name] I've got some, still got some stuff coming up in September, but it's this was separately. It was through [agency name] 'cause I asked who the quality manager was, and then as a result I sent in a CV and he asked to see me.

Interestingly, Samantha has also taken advantage of being placed in College D by sending her CV directly to the quality manager. Unfortunately, he was made redundant the day after.

Validated by Samantha

The following Figure 26 (p.163) captures Samantha's experience of this more complex market and public sector intermediary arrangement. It had comprised of an interaction between agency and college then a convergence with her as a market/public sector contractor being subcontracted to additional public sector organisations (care home and a housing trust) – a further interaction.

FIGURE 26 MARKET AND PUBLIC SECTOR SYSTEM (TYPE TWO (G))

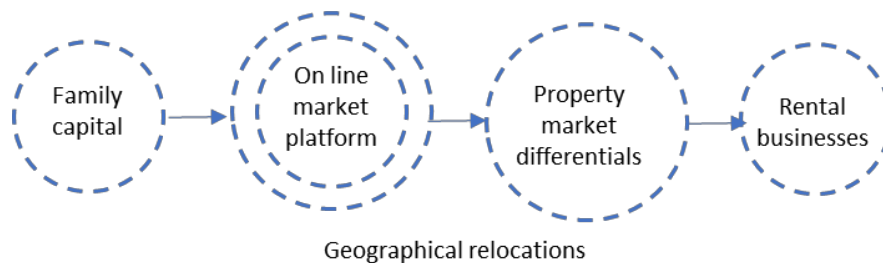


Source: Samantha

Remaining with market intermediaries, various online commercial internet platforms were also mentioned by Clare, Kaz and Samantha. Clare had created personal accounts on a number of job search engines to forward local vacancies direct to her email inbox. By the third interview, however, she had lost interest in online agencies, finding her local agency and coffee contact intermediaries more successful. From the start, Samantha had distrusted all internet job search products. Even friends had been unable to get her to engage with job search platforms or LinkedIn. In contrast, property and rental market platforms had been crucial in Kaz and her family's transition plans.

Kaz's story of drawing on family financial capital and online platforms provided an example of a market and social intermediary, as presented next, in Figure 27 (p.164).

FIGURE 27 MARKET AND SOCIAL INTERMEDIARY SYSTEM (TYPE THREE (B))



Source: Kaz

The final intermediary revealed in these stories has been categorised as a traditional careers and education intermediary (Type 6). Clare had described how an executive work coach (initially funded by her employer) had used questioning to help her re-vision her future, outlined in the extract below:

Extract from Clare Story One

In interview two, Clare had reflected on becoming stuck in a job that was making her ill:

Yes, he asked me, "Well what really motivates you Clare?" I have to work with values driven people and they have to be the same as mine: where they develop their people, look after people, value people. I would always have to work with an organisation, company or another person who was like that....and I have him to thank for pushing me to make me move, get out because you get into that sort of lethargic almost there is no energy left to do what you need to do...

Validated by Clare

Clare's coach had been funded by her employer, representing another intermediary involved in her transition.

Clare's unpaid volunteering had also acted as a transition influence into a permanent casual relief post. If any permanent staff had been unable to work then she would be the first called on to cover, and this relief role was on a permanent basis. Her unpaid work had been similar to Samantha's unpaid attendance at the Awarding Body conference that also went on to convert into further paid work: a form of job seeking or unpaid transition work.

To summarise, transition influences included challenging public sector working conditions, health concerns, the state of family finances, various intermediaries and unpaid work or transition work. Four types of intermediary system had facilitated transitions from simple to complex work: social intermediaries, market and public sector intermediaries, market and social intermediaries and a form of traditional careers intermediary. Complex market and public sector, and market and social intermediaries were all found to be operating as intermediary systems. The women's stories also furnished evidence of public sector organisations³⁰ deploying invisible recruitment practices. The practices had drawn on unpaid work, such as volunteering, attending conferences for free and informally engaging with social networks. Samantha's story demonstrated how social networks, also in precarious work, could beget further precarious work; whilst Clare's story evidenced how friendships (social intermediaries) can be subject to collateral damage when over relied upon.

³⁰ Organisations had included town councils, further education colleges, and a university, although these might also be considered quasi market and public sector organisations in light of deregulation.

5.2.3 Setting direction influences

Interestingly, participants' stories revealed how some setting direction influences were not always perceived by them. For example, all three participants noted key events triggering organisational change but had not attributed them to either political decisions or Government policy. The exception was Samantha's anger with Parliament for raising her state pension age, as she stated:

If I had had my own pension, the teacher pension and the state pension, I could have sat back and thought you know what am I going to do, I've got choices? It's...we've been robbed of the dignity to retire in the fashion that we should have been allowed to do. That's, that's it in a nutshell. (Samantha transcript data from interview three)

A further setting direction influence were the differentials in property values across England's regions. Kaz and her family had taken advantage of one such differential, relocating from London to the Midlands, to set up a rental business. In contrast, Clare and Samantha had been anchored to their geographical localities, by family commitments, limiting the job opportunities available to them.

Equally invisible to the women were the setting direction influences of social norms and beliefs. For example, Samantha had experienced a mixture of emotions as she broke her own age norms, reflected in the following story extract. Furthermore, the story provides an insight into how her beliefs, particularly about what others might think she should be doing at her age, had played into a self-fulfilling prophecy of not applying for particular jobs.

Samantha Extract from Story Three

In interview one, she had been angry that at her age she found herself trekking across the city to fulfil an agency contract:

... I mean I can remember getting on a train to city X and you had to change at town Y and I just thought, why should I have to do this, and I felt ...what's the word? I felt debased, humiliated that at my age I should have to be trekking all the way to city X on the train, sitting on a train station to get to an interview, yeh. I felt humiliated, I thought what have I done to deserve this and I thought the answer is nothing!

She did not believe it was worth retraining and did not believe she could get jobs in either administration or retail work - primarily because of her age, as stated:

...what retraining is available for me at my age, bugger all...it's a bit of both: age, experience...it's all very well saying I will get a little admin job or I will work in a library, but they are just pipe dreams, they don't happen! At the end of the day you are employed for the skills that you have because that's what people want. Yeah, ehhm but that's what I think it is. I can't change it I can't say oh... I mean I could do...I've applied for teaching assistant roles, but I have thought bloody hell ... I don't want that.

Validated by Samantha

Norms of responsibility for family and household work were also evident across all three women's stories, although Clare had mediated these through outsourcing tasks to cleaners and gardeners. In contrast, Samantha had assumed responsibility for cleaning, cooking, caring for her grandchild one day a week and organising her daughter's wedding - with her stress levels rising - as noted in her account below:

And the one night I did, well I got very stressed about it. So anyway, the Doctor gave me a few Diazepam, but actually chiefly I saved those for the wedding, 'cause I... You only get a few, so I thought I stockpiled it a bit, there's only about five - you know, you're not allowed many in case you try to take your own life or something, you know... (Samantha transcript data from interview three)

Like Clare, Kaz had additional support from her mother-in-law, who had lived with the family, and shared some of the domestic work.

Across all three stories, there had been evidence of occupational identity setting direction to remaining in the same work irrespective of either its quality, availability, or how or who was delivering it. For example, Samantha's identity of professional educator had led her to work in a private education setting. She had not, however, been able to accommodate to the business requirement of quantity of assessments over quality, as described below:

...because there were people saying to me, "Can we claim for this Diploma?" I would say "No!" and they would say "Why?" and I would say "...because they are missing two units and those units are not correct and I am not allowing you to claim them!". Ehhm...because they are not there...so I wasn't nasty about it. I was just saying well if we have a spot check, which is possible, and you are claiming for units that are rubbish and don't meet the criteria, yeah, you can get in a lot of trouble for that. Ehhm so I expect it is all being done behind my back now.

(Samantha transcript data from interview three)

Unfortunately, by the second interview Samantha had been made redundant again. Her account mirrors Sarah's experience of transitioning into a private education company only to be dismissed before the end of her six-month probation, outlined in the previous chapter. Equally, Clare had continued to focus on training and human resources work, whilst Kaz had gone on to find an employment coach contract as well as setting up her rental business. Interestingly, these women had all transitioned into complex work with at least one of their contracts associated with one of their previous careers.

To sum up, the setting direction influences requiring working for longer were only perceived by Samantha. Further influences included differentials in property values and geographical anchors both creating and closing down options. Norms and beliefs were also setting direction influences; for example, Samantha's expectations of what she should have been doing at her age and assumed responsibilities for household and care work. A further setting direction influence included occupational identities that seemed to focus job searches on similar work done in the past, again narrowing choices. There were no references to intermediary systems with setting direction influence.

5.2.4 Accommodation influences

On the one hand, both Clare and Kaz had felt relieved to be leaving their public sector organisations and exited at the prospect of exploring new career and business opportunities. On the other hand, Samantha had continued to feel quite emotionally low, and had difficulty accommodating to her new situation, described in the following extract:

Extract from Samantha Story Three

In her first interview, Samantha described how she has recently been emotionally low because of leaving her college job. This continues in her second interview, as a result of her second redundancy. She is also feeling weak from her recent allergic reaction to her grandchild's medicine.

...I haven't been well enough to sell myself in the last few weeks and I need to do that on the phone...

In the third interview, she describes how the Awarding Body work and managing her daughter's wedding had been too much:

And the one night I did, well I got very stressed about it. So anyway, the Doctor gave me a few Diazepam, but actually chiefly I saved those for the wedding, 'cause I... You only get a few, so I thought I stockpiled it a bit, there's only about five – you know, you're not allowed many in case you try to take your own life or something, you know...

Validated by Samantha

Unlike Clare and Kaz, Samantha had not benefitted from the emotional or financial support of a husband or partner and had not received coaching to help her with her career decisions (all examples of accommodation influences). Instead, her social network had facilitated further precarious work, and her family had drawn on her already depleted emotional and financial resources, contributing to a further decline in her mental health.

5.2.5 Lock influences

The STF map highlights how influences across all systems had the potential to configure into locks. Clare and Kaz's financial security, however, had enabled them to remain relatively free of these. In contrast, Samantha had been vulnerable to three locks described as carrying on working, exiting a permanent employee contract and deregulation, all of which had locked her into complex work. The carrying on work lock had included: past exit from full-time work to care for children (past environmental and social systems); divorce and, consequently, only being in receipt of a single income (past and present social systems) again compromising financial security; a sense of responsibility for family care leading to giving up a day a week to care for her grandchild (individual system norm and social system); and, finally, Government policy that had delivered an unexpected rise in her state pension age, delaying access to pensions. By delaying access to pensions, the women had been required to work for longer whilst their unpaid care work had remained unacknowledged (environmental social system and individual system). The exiting

permanent work lock had included the transition influences leading to their exit.³¹ For Samantha, these transition influences had included challenging public sector working conditions, increased workload, rising targets and demanding OFSTED requirements; and the organisations shift to a more business and commercial culture. These had clashed with Samantha's strong sense of professional and occupations identity (individual, organisational and environmental systems).

The third lock, described by Samantha as 'incorporation', had been the Government's deregulation of post-16 further education that had presented further education colleges with an opportunity to take control of their budgets and operate as businesses (environment system). At the time, this had seemed less of an influential lock when compared to being locked out of market based intermediary systems that might have ensured regular and continuous contract work, such as those described by Ruth and Eleanor in Chapter Four. Unfortunately for Samantha, her professional body had not restricted access to the delivery of her profession, resulting in colleges being able to recruit more directly. As a result, Samantha had found herself locked out of engagement with market based intermediary systems and regular compliance-based work and locked into complex working arrangements (environment and organisation systems).

To sum up, Samantha appeared trapped within three sets of interlocking influences holding her in complex work. Unfortunately, by remaining in more commercial education contracting, she had experienced a further jarring of her professional occupational identity and emotional wellbeing. In contrast, Clare and Kaz had also remained in complex work, but were buffered by the emotional and financial support provided by husbands and a work coach.

³¹ Lock influences can include transition, setting direction and accommodation influences because they can combine and form locks.

5.2.6 Absent influences

Previously, Kaz had been a careers adviser and Clare had benefitted from the ongoing support of an executive coach. Both women had felt comfortable about using the internet and had gone on to engage in work outside their occupational identities, although remaining in similar sectors. Samantha had received no such support and her unhelpful beliefs, around age barriers and use of the internet, had gone unchecked. Access to impartial advice and guidance may have challenged some of these unhelpful beliefs, as well as supporting more creative thinking about opportunities that were available to her.

5.3 ATYPICAL SIMPLE TO COMPLEX TRANSITIONS AND INTERMEDIARY SYSTEMS

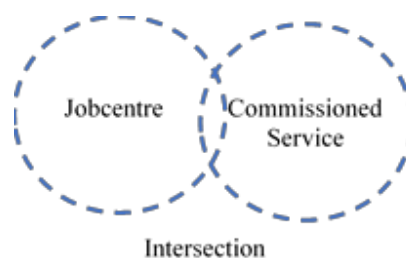
Rebecca and Kate present more atypical transitions from simple into complex working arrangements. Rebecca had been working for a corporation delivering services through public sector organisations. Kate had worked for the council as a family and teenage pregnancy officer and had taken up their offer of voluntary redundancy.

When Rebecca had been made redundant, she had transitioned into juggling renting her home, finishing off her work for a corporation, attending a New Enterprise Allowance scheme, setting up a private intermediary business and starting a university degree. Meanwhile, Kate had experienced two job changes, within a relatively short space of time, all whilst juggling domestic work in support of family in flexible contracting. Both participants had started their transitions by engaging

with a more traditional intermediary: the Jobcentre. The next sections present their engagement experiences with these more traditional intermediary systems.

Starting with Rebecca, her engagement with the Jobcentre had been tricky whilst trying to launch herself as an intermediary business. For example, at the same time as trying to claim benefit, her ex-company had invited her to one of their high-profile public networking events. On the one hand, if she claimed to be a consultant at the event, and her picture had been spotted by the Jobcentre, her benefit and mortgage protection insurance would have been jeopardised. On the other hand, describing herself as unemployed, at the event, would have compromised her new company's credibility. After transferring to the Jobcentre's New Enterprise Allowance (NEA), the problem disappeared, but she had known the benefit would only last six months: timing would be everything. A further requirement of NEA had been attendance on a 'Start Your Own Business' course, commissioned by the Jobcentre. The intermediary system, involving the Jobcentre and commissioned course, is presented next, in Figure 28.

FIGURE 28 TRADITIONAL CAREERS AND MARKET INTERMEDIARY (TYPE SIX (C))



Source: Rebecca

Rebecca had been disappointed with the Jobcentre's commissioned course, as stated below:

*We had a one, 2½ hour session in an office block in [central London]. It was pretty pikey. You couldn't bring hot drinks in because you might spill them on each other. We had about 20 of us in a room with this guy lecturing us on how to do a business plan. Everybody was at different levels, doing different sorts of business...The room was appallingly shocking. It was dreadful, it was dreadful and ... The thing is how much they're getting paid for all these appalling services ... The reason is the people they're commissioning these services from they couldn't organise a **** up in a brewery!*
(Rebecca transcript data from interview three)

She had not, however, been put off the idea of starting her new business.

Returning to Kate, she had engaged with the Jobcentre immediately after taking up her public sector voluntary redundancy. As a condition of claiming benefit, she was required to agree to take any job offered; in this case a doctor's receptionist. Shortly after starting, a clash of work and family demands had meant needing to change job again. Given her recent experience of doctor's receptionist work, she had assumed her best chance of finding another job would be to apply for the same type of work, but at a different doctor's surgery. Having arrived at the next doctor's surgery receptionist job, with time to take stock, she realised how she had become trapped in this work. Each job move was being logged on her CV, compromising any further changes, as she states:

I daren't look for something else...the other job I was only there like seven months...somewhere else for two months, on my CV that's not going to look brilliant, so... (Kate transcript data from interview three)

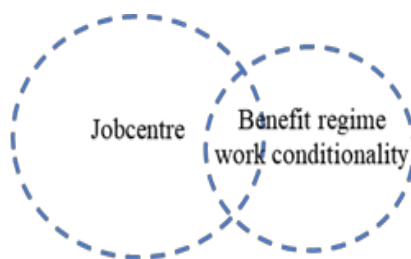
She had never intended to become a doctor's receptionist, and was not entirely comfortable with the job, as she describes in the next statement:

...maybe that's my problem, you know, I've got to step back and well it's not the sort of job that, you know, you need to be that dedicated really, you know, but then as a work ethic, I can't do that, you know, I have to be dedicated...It's strange it's really hard!

(Kate transcript data from interview three)

The engagement with these types of intermediary systems is illustrated in Figure 29 (p. 175) below, which captures the Jobcentre and its work conditionality rules.

FIGURE 29 TRADITIONAL CAREERS AND EDUCATION INTERMEDIARY (TYPE SIX (B))

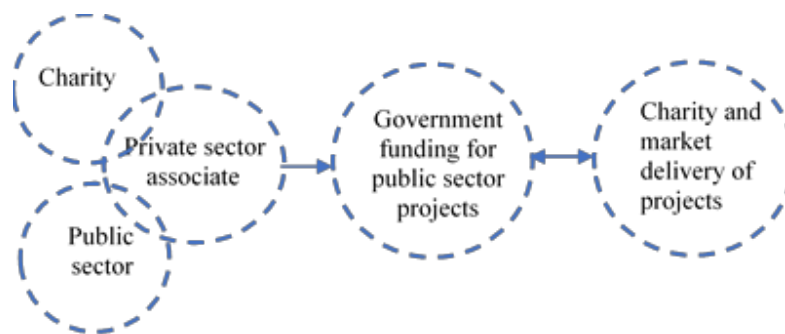


Source: Kate

It is evident that early on in their transitions both women had engaged with the Jobcentre, but neither had found them helpful. At best, Rebecca had found the experience restrictive, whereas Kate had sensed them as locking her into unsatisfactory work. In response to her experiences, Rebecca had perceived herself as a newly emerging entrepreneurial intermediary system. Her new intermediary company aimed to develop private and public partnerships to bid for Government

contracts and, at the same time, provide her with employment. Figure 30 (p.176) captures Rebecca's new emerging public sector, charity and market intermediary system.

FIGURE 30 MARKET AND PUBLIC SECTOR INTERMEDIARY SYSTEM (TYPE TWO (I))



Source: Rebecca

By the end of the research, her company had received a commission for two to three days work, helping a charity with their Government funded project.

Social intermediaries were equally influential in shaping transitions. For example, Kate's husband had been a contractor working away from home during the week and returning on weekends. Just before her first interview, her son also returned home, unable to pay his own family's rent on a zero-hours contract. During the course of the research, she had found herself responsible for both her part-time job and the family's domestic work: the cleaning, shopping, preparing food and, when necessary, caring for her grandson. Her family's precarious contracting work acted as a transition influence on her resigning from the first doctor's surgery job, represented in Figure 31 (177).

FIGURE 31 SOCIAL INTERMEDIARY SYSTEM (TYPE ONE (C))



Source Kate

5.4 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER FINDINGS

These stories revealed various influences shaping transitions from employee contracts to managing complex arrangements of work. Starting with wider influences, transition influences included changes in the structure of public sector organisations, changes in working condition and rising levels of work-related stress impacting on health. Setting direction influences included the political decision to raise the state pension age (only perceived by Samantha), entrepreneurial opportunities arising from regional differences in property values (utilised by Kaz and her family), commitments to norms around age and responsibility for domestic work and occupational identities that fixed gazes on searching for similar types of work with the expectations of accessing similar work cultures and values. Only Samantha's stories revealed locks, with Clare and Kaz being buffered by family financial security. Samantha's lock influences included sets of transition influences leading to her exit, being required to carry on working for longer and being locked out of market based intermediary systems that might have supported continuous contracting.

Intermediary systems were all involved in transition. These included a social system (Clare and Samantha), traditional careers and education system (Clare and Samantha) and a market and social system (Kaz). Unlike the experiences of participants discussed in Chapter Four, the market-based system had not locked participants into linear contracting (one contract after the other). Social intermediary systems were also found to carry some risk. These included where ex-work colleagues had transitioned into precarious contracts themselves and then facilitated further precarious work. Furthermore, in the context of highly competitive frequent contract turnover, there had also been evidence of collateral damage to friendships.

Both Kate and Rebecca referred to the influence of the Jobcentre in shaping their transitions. Kate believed the Jobcentre had led to her becoming trapped in an unsuitable job whilst Rebecca had felt she had launched her business despite them. Further insights into intermediary systems included Rebecca's goal to become an intermediary system: facilitating private and public sector bids for Government funding. Meanwhile, Kate's family had become her intermediary system into more complex domestic work, as she supported them with their zero-hour contracting arrangements.

In the case of more traditional careers and education intermediaries, Kate's transition stories attributed the start of being trapped in doctor's receptionist work to the Jobcentre's work conditionality rules. In contrast, Clare's private coach had supported her with deciding to leave her job and envision a future of many career possibilities. Finally, Kaz's description of a more entrepreneurial intermediary system had drawn on family financial capital, online platforms and property market differentials to establish a family rental business in the Midlands. For all three participants, however, online platforms had started out being essential, but their influence had diminished once local networks had been established, and this had

been the case for Kaz's more entrepreneurial type too. Finally, a surprising finding is the extent to which public sector organisations had been drawing on more invisible recruitment practice to attract casual workers, particularly via existing staff.

A further finding was the nature of complex work: four kinds of unpaid and paid work were noted. Unpaid work consisted of: unpaid transition work (such as attending a conference, volunteering and engaging with network contacts); unpaid household work (such as cleaning, gardening, preparing meals and, in Clare's case, managing those providing these services); unpaid care work (such as babysitting a grandchild); and unpaid market work (such as trapped time between contracts, travel time between contracts and administration time). Paid market work combined various short-term contacts that included permanent employee hours, agency contract hours, maternity cover hours, other casual work (for example invigilating exams and moderating portfolios at home) and Rebecca's launch of her new intermediary business.

The accommodations required to manage complex work had included accepting the need to engage in significantly more unpaid transition work. The women had also recognised the necessity of converting social relationships into social intermediary systems, even with the possibility of damaging friendships, to secure the next contract. It was evident that many of the women had been learning how to juggle more complex paid and unpaid work arrangements.

Finally, reflecting on the thesis research question, these participants and, in some cases, their husbands, had been delivering public sector services that were either no longer required or were no longer the preserve of the sector. Market and public sector intermediary systems, outlined in Chapter Four, had shown little or no

interest in locking these participants into public sector contracts because their services were no longer in demand. Instead they relied more heavily on social intermediaries, traditional intermediaries or had opted out of organisational work to set up their own businesses.

CHAPTER SIX: TRANSITIONS FROM PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYMENT INTO ECONOMIC INACTIVITY/UNEMPLOYMENT AND CARE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Drawing on the stories of seven research participants, Chapter Six presents two similar patterns of transition into economic inactivity,³² unemployment³³ and care. The first pattern involved an education sector administrative manager, counsellor, public sector manager and media executive transitioning from public sector contracts into economic inactivity and/or unemployment and care. The second pattern involved a teacher, local government manager and an NHS worker being held, or suspended, in transition. Their stories revealed how both patterns of transition had been shaped by setting direction, transition, accommodation and lock

³² Economic inactivity is defined as people not in employment who have not been seeking work within the last four weeks and/or unable to start work within the next two weeks. Office for National Statistics website

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/search?q=economic+activity> accessed 2/11/18

³³ Unemployment is measured by the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and includes people who meet the international definition of unemployment specified by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) as follows: *being without a job, have been actively seeking work in the past four weeks and are available to start in the next two week, or have found a job and expect to be starting within the following two weeks.*

Office for National Statistics website

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/methodologies/aguidetolabourmarketstatistics#unemployment> accessed 28/08/2019

influences, as well as the influence of several intermediary systems. The stories also identified how unpaid care work often remained unperceived as work by participants and those around them. Furthermore, how market and public sector intermediary systems were able to restrict women's paid work, by disabling its flexibility, when needing to provide care at home.

Similar to Chapters Four and Five, influences noted in participants' analytical stories (see Appendix 9), this time for transitions into economic inactivity, unemployment and care, were again, mapped on to an STF outline representing the transition. In this case, the transition pattern is represented by Louise, Jane, Jenny and Helen's analytical stories, listed in Appendix 9 (pp. 304 -312). The following extract is from Jane's analytical story found in Appendix 9 (pp.304-305), supporting a further illustration of the STF mapping process.

Extract from Jane's Analytical Story

Interview one

a) In 2002, Jane was made redundant from the Post Office and left with a healthy redundancy and pension package. She continued working for a Post Office supply chain company, later resigning to care for her brother. Up to 2015, she was working as a full-time school data manager, but the job became increasingly difficult in the face of her elderly mother's increasing care needs. She will take a 25 per cent cut in her Post Office pension because she is claiming before she is 60.

[Environment (increasing work-load pressure, inflexible work deadlines, lack of state provision of care) recurses with money (access to previous Post Office pension later linked to Union) recurses with Identity (responsibility for care) leads to recursion transition to unpaid care work and casual work or economic inactivity.]

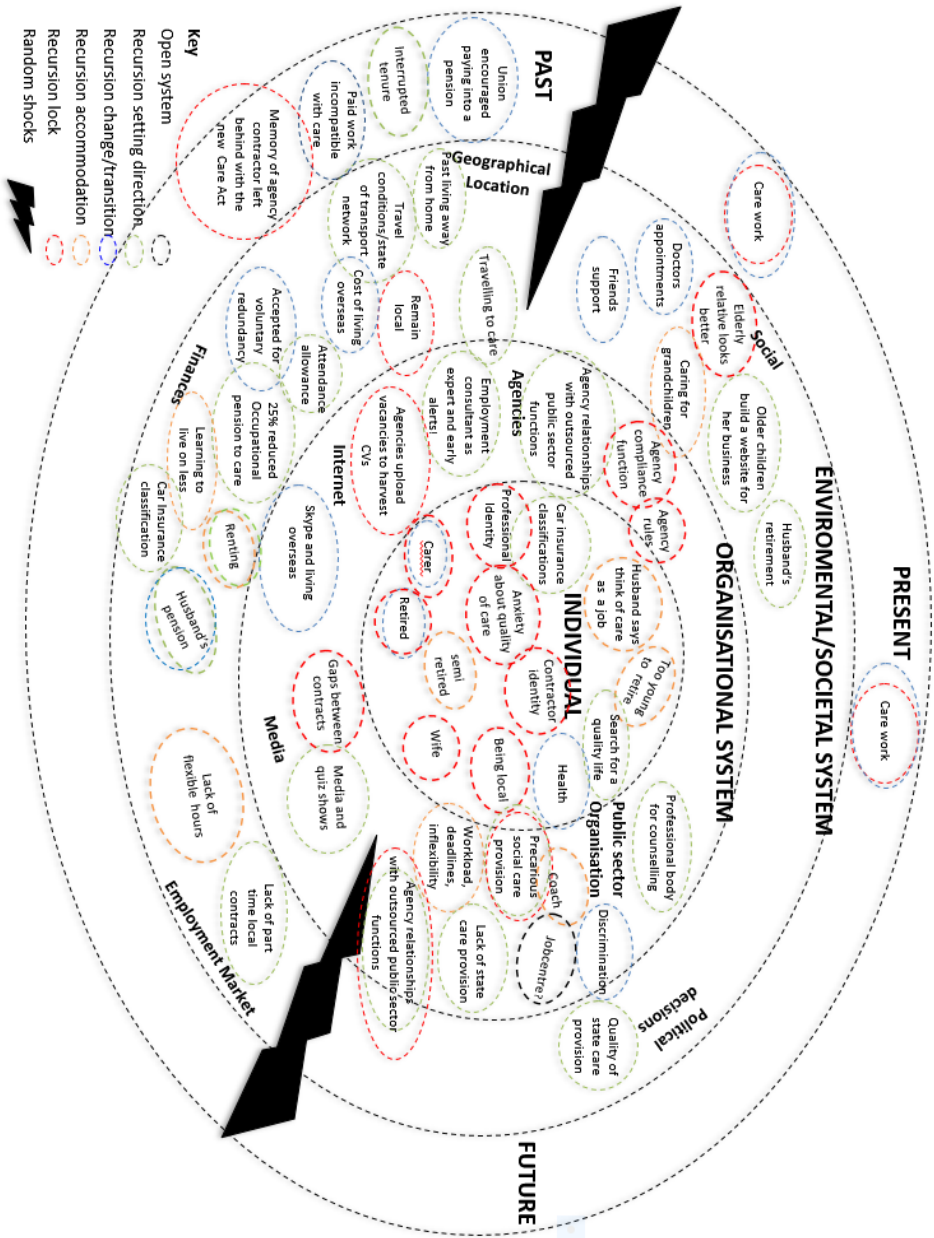
b) Friends text her about a temporary school data manager post and tell her about a local garden centre that holds a list for local casual-work. Her mother looks much

better since she has been able care for her properly. *[Social intermediaries (Friends forward job opportunities) recursion direction towards economic activity. Her mother looks much better – recursion accommodation to care]*

c) Her Husband suggests she considers her full-time caring role as a job. *[Social intermediary (Husband) recursion accommodation to constructing full time care as a job]*

Influences derived from the extract included workload pressures, deadlines, inflexibility, reduction in pension, identity of carer, unpaid care, casual work, friends' support (social intermediaries), mother looking better after care and husband (supporting accommodation to care). These influences, and those derived from Louise, Jane, Jenny and Helen's analytical stories, are mapped on to the STF representing transition into economic inactivity, unemployment and care in Figure 32 (p. 184). At this stage, it is also apparent that unpaid work and intermediary systems are difficult to fully represent in this STF format, and this is discussed in more detail in Chapters 7 and 8.

FIGURE 32 SYSTEM THEORY FRAMEWORK MAP FOR TRANSITIONS INTO ECONOMIC INACTIVITY AND OR UNEMPLOYMENT



The rest of the chapter is presented in three sections: the first presents stories of transitions into economic inactivity and care - noting the influences, including those of intermediaries, shaping them; the second section presents stories of influences that appear to hold participants in transition - again, noting references to intermediaries; and the final section summarises the chapter's overall findings.

6.2 ECONOMIC INACTIVITY, UNEMPLOYMENT AND CARE

This section presents four stories of women transitioning from public sector contracts into economic inactivity/unemployment whilst providing unpaid family care work. The section illustrates how some participants, with sufficient income, were able to describe their public sector exits and care work as semi-retirement and retirement. In contrast, one participant, a single woman and long-term contractor, went on to describe herself as being between contracts and a carer; she had been unable to afford to be out of contracting for too long.

6.2.1 Stories of transition: economic inactivity, unemployment and care

By the end of the research, Louise, Jane, Jenny and Helen had transitioned into economic inactivity or unemployment and unpaid care work, although not perceived by them at the time. Instead, they had described themselves as retired, semi-retired, a carer or between contracts - despite all being younger than the newly raised state pension age.

Shortly after the first interview, Louise, a counsellor, and just turned sixty, telephoned to say she had made the decision to retire. During the interview, she had

reflected on how she had been delivering counselling services for both a private company and a charity through a doctor's surgery. Just a few months earlier, the private sector company had made her redundant and, at the same time, the doctor's surgery mentioned they would like her to start measuring her counselling outcomes. The idea of measuring outcomes in counselling work had run counter to her own ideas of the nature of her work, triggering thoughts of leaving. Further reasons for giving up her counselling work started to stack up: her second husband had just retired and wanted them to spend more time at their new holiday home and she had wanted to offer more help with caring for her seriously ill grandchild. In combination, these influences had contributed to her decision to retire. Financially, they planned to rely on her husband's pension, at least until she could take receipt of her delayed state pension age and occupational pensions.

Meanwhile, Jane, in her mid-fifties, had just resigned from a full-time job as a school manager to become the full-time carer of her elderly mother. In the first interview, she reflected on life before resignation: an increasing workload, tighter deadlines and ever-increasing levels of anxiety created by the unpredictable care needs of her elderly mother. At the same time, her husband had also been thinking of retiring, and she had calculated that by combining both occupational pensions, even though she would be taking hers early, they could just about afford to stop work. In the first interview, she had started to draw on her occupational pension, but had been taken by surprise at the 25 percent pension penalty, resulting from accessing it early. In the second interview, Jane had started a casual seasonal job at her local garden centre, to cover the purchase of occasional luxuries such as her favourite magazine. By the third interview, the seasonal work had ended, her husband had retired, and they were both sharing the care of her mother. At the start of the research, she had described herself as a carer and semi-retired seasonal worker and, by the end, she had claimed to be retired.

Jenny, single and in her early sixties, described herself as being both between contracts and a carer. Previously, she had been a limited company public sector contractor delivering public sector management services through an agency. In her more recent contract, she was living away from home, and renting a room. Her accommodation had been equidistant (approximately 100 miles) from her home and the home of an increasingly fragile relative. Reflecting on her recent contract, she had described how it had been continually renewed until, after 18 months, she had decided it was time to leave; she had not wanted to feel like an employee. Her decision to leave had also been prompted by a hint, from her agency's employment consultant, that a part time contract, closer to home, would be coming up shortly. Unfortunately, after resigning, her elderly relative took a turn for the worse and, due to a series of changes within her preferred agency, the local contract slipped through her grasp. By the third interview, Jenny described herself as being both a carer and between contracts. In the meantime, she had been drawing on a small private pension, and claiming attendance allowance, but had known that she could not afford to be out of contracting forever.

Helen, in her late fifties, had found the recent challenges, of an otherwise happy 23-year career in public sector media, becoming too much, leading to her accepting the voluntary redundancy package. In the first interview, she described herself as semi-retired whilst continuing to receive careers advice from a private careers company and completing a training course in executive coaching. These services had all been funded from her voluntary redundancy package, keeping her fully occupied before leaving. In her second interview, she had gone overseas to join her husband in their family holiday home where he had been recovering from a serious operation. By the third interview, her husband's health had improved, and he had returned to contracting. Meanwhile, she had rented out her two UK homes and been thinking of engaging in some contracting work herself.

To sum up, all four stories described transition into fuzzy forms of economic inactivity, unemployment and forms of care. Similarities across stories had included previous experiences of increasingly challenging public sector working conditions, tensions between paid work and care and adoption of new identities (carer, between contracts, retired and contractor). Participants had made no references to terms such as economic inactivity or unemployment, possibly, avoiding them because of their negative status.

6.2.2 Transition Influences

Transition influences have already been identified as influences with the power to trigger changes in work (also outlined in the thesis glossary). Transition influences referenced by Louise, Jane, Jenny and Helen included increasingly challenging public sector working conditions intertwined with circumstances that had enabled them to give up paid work, as well as being responsible for meeting family care needs. These influences are presented in more detail next.

Starting with public sector working conditions, three of the women described how working conditions had become more challenging; they had been relieved to leave. For example, Louise had mentioned the GP surgery's intention to start monitoring her patient outcomes. Helen had described an ever-increasing workload and Jane had described stressful work deadlines and her job's inflexibility when facing unpredictable care demands at home. Jenny's situation, however, had been slightly different. As a long-term public-sector contractor, she had expected her last public sector contract to have ended after six months. The contract, however, had been repeatedly extended, and, eighteen months later, she had decided it was time to leave.

All four women were under state pension age and had been able to rely on occupational and private pensions. The income had provided them with sufficient means to be able to give up paid work. Helen, Jane and Louise had also benefitted from financial support provided by husbands whilst Helen had been in receipt of a voluntary redundancy package and, later, received rental income from both her UK properties. Irrespective of being too young to claim state pension, Louise, Jane and Helen all went on to describe themselves as either semi-retired or retired. Jenny had been the only participant not to identify as retired. From the start, she described herself as a carer and then, later on, between contracts. As a single woman and long-term agency contractor, Jenny had known she could not afford to stay out of contracting for too long. The extract below captures her expectation of a return:

Extract from Jenny Story Three

In interview three, she reflected on how her relative's health has deteriorated, as described below:

...my the relative went into a bit of a difficult period I suppose health wise just not serious health but just deterioration of her independence I would say. So, I've been away for five weeks staying with her, so I am now actually in some respects a carer although we are having some extra support from carers as well so that's what I am probably doing up until Christmas – unless she -she may stabilise ... it just emerged like that really.

Jenny described how she needed to be around her relative to manage all her affairs. However, she doesn't entirely discount her return to work, as she states:

...managing all the people and everything so. But, touch wood, it is not a serious situation, it is just a slight deterioration so yes, my circumstances have changed but I can still step back into looking for work when it seems appropriate to do so.

Validated by Jenny

A further transition influence had been the participants' unquestioning assumptions that they were responsible for family care, indicating this was an internal social norm for all of them. An illustration of the norm is presented in the extract below, where Jane assumes total responsibility for meeting her mother's needs:

...she's become more and more disabled, she's 83 and very frail. As she became more and more disabled, I became more and more unhappy at work because I reached the stage where I was in tears just because Mum needed emergency dental treatment and she rang me up and she was crying and I had a deadline to meet at work and I thought I can't do this anymore and I just reached a point I'm not going to, so that's how I got to where I am... (Jane transcript data from interview three)

Not only does the text capture her normed response to care, it captures the lack of support her mother had been able to draw on, other than from Jane. Upon resigning, Jane had felt a surge of relief at the thought of no further clashes between the job and her mother's needs. It had been the unpredictable nature of these clashes that had created so much of her stress. The price of her retiring early had been a 25 percent reduction in the value of her occupational pension, the penalty for early access.

Helen also experienced similar clashes of job and home responsibilities. Whilst with the media company, she had been subject to unrelenting pressures to generate income, make staff redundant and significant stress, created by the more male dominated work culture and illustrated by an appraisal comment describing her as a "little girl". At the same time, she had been doing a 60 to 70 hour week whilst caring for her elderly parents, who had since passed away. She had also been experiencing her own health problems and, more recently, her husband had been taken seriously ill. She recalled having once loved her job, but, like Joanne and Fiona

in Chapter Four, had been counting down the days to receiving her voluntary redundancy offer.

To sum up, a combination of transition influences had resulted in these participants transitions into economic inactivity and or unemployment. Examples of these influences had included challenging public sector working conditions and a public sector contract being continuously extended, creating a sense of uncertainty. A significant influence had been their unperceived acceptance of being responsible for caring for family members. Except for Jenny, these participants had all been able to afford to give up paid work completely to provide care.

6.2.3 Setting direction influences

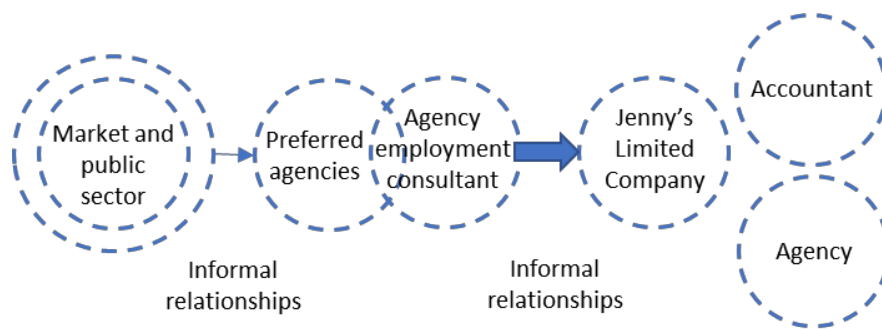
Setting direction influences seemed to nudge the direction of participants' transitions rather than trigger a transition. In the case of these participants, setting direction influences had included the state of the UK's transport network, a car insurance company, and Jenny and Jane's concerns about the quality of state care. Jenny had cited the UK's transport network because of difficulties getting to and from her home and work, and concerns about how quickly she could get to her elderly relative in an emergency. Jane had referred to her experience of a car insurance company insisting on classifying her as retired, for the purposes of registering her insurance. Jane and Jenny had also been concerned about the availability and quality of state care for their elderly relatives. In addition, all four women revealed the setting direction influence of intermediary systems, discussed in more detail next.

After resigning from her job, ex-work colleagues had told Jane about casual hours available at her local garden centre. During the course of the study, she had completed a few hours at the garden centre and made good friends there, earning enough money for a few luxuries. These friends had promised to let her know when

future casual contracts were coming up, acting as a social intermediary system (Type 1a).

In contrast, Jenny had been contracting away from home, losing touch with many of her local social networks. Instead, she had been entirely reliant on the support of agencies to broker a local part time contract, particularly given her need to provide increasing levels of care at home. Unfortunately, reliance on one such complex market and public sector intermediary system, for local part time contracting, had set her in the direction of economic inactivity. Her description of this market and public sector intermediary system consisted of a public sector organisation outsourcing its hiring function to a private management company who, in turn, had a preferred list of agencies to furnish compliance checked professionals. The structure of this intermediary is captured in Figure 33, presented below.

FIGURE 33 MARKET AND PUBLIC SECTOR INTERMEDIARY SYSTEM (TYPE TWO (C))



Source: Jenny

Her story of the intermediary system's setting direction influence started with her preferred agency employment consultant. The consultant had told her that a part-time contract, close to where she lived, would be coming up soon. After leaving her current contract, allowing her some time for a holiday, she had found out that senior

personnel across her local authority, management company and agency had disagreed on how to proceed with the recruitment arrangements. The contract had then fallen out of the control of her preferred agency, resulting in her not being put forward. The description of these events is presented in the story below:

Extract from Jenny's Story Three

Event 1: Agency A

The first event involved agency A's employment consultant alerting Jenny to a potential local post that would be coming up in the near future. The consultant had heard about the vacancy through a public-sector worker she was managing on placement in the same authority, as stated:

I had actually been told about this job three months earlier by another agency [A] who had someone placed there. And I'd also been told some information that I probably shouldn't have been told and I don't think the agency should have held that information either because it was quite sensitive and it was quite confidential.

Event 2: Agency B

In the second event, Jenny had been surprised that agency B, rather than agency A had let her know about the same authority's vacancy and that they were now the submitting agency. At this point Jenny took part in a phone interview but she had been unsure about it and decided to give herself some thinking time, as stated:

...I didn't agree to take the post straight away, I think she was offering it me, but I said I needed to think about it...

Event 3: Agency C

The third event involved an agency C, they had approached her about two other practitioner posts coming up with the same authority – [Author: Jenny's correction] not the one I had a telephone interview for - two other posts. One vacancy was for a permanent post and the other a contract to fill in before the appointment to the

permanent post. Jenny sensed pressure from agency C to apply for the posts, as described:

...this other agency [C] approached me about the same authority about two other posts and they said they're working very quickly the manager is, they want someone, I can see you are very experienced, and you can see, feel that kind of pressure that's trying to be applied and we can see you've been out of work for a few months now and that you might be.... So therefore, the implication of that is that you are going to be desperate to go wherever and my approach is unusual as I am selective although I can stay a long time really that's quite unusual because often people go from one contract to another... I think I said no I am not considering those posts because I am already in negotiations around a more senior post...

Event 4: Agency A returns

In the fourth event, Jenny spoke with agency A, she had regularly been in touch with agency A as it had been one of the key agencies that she had valued at the time... She asked the consultant why they had not had the vacancy especially as she had been forewarned that it would be coming available. The explanation had been that the agency had lost the contract with the authority and were no longer involved in managing the vacancies, as stated:

I have since had a conversation with the first agency [A] yesterday actually, because I was expecting that agency to contact me about this job and they didn't... I wanted to come clean about how I felt that you told me about this position being a potential three months ago but actually it didn't come from you but it came from somewhere else... So what had happened was in that three months you get senior personnel, it's very complicated, senior personnel in the agency, negotiating with local authorities around who ever they're contracting with and that's a different ball game. I don't know. Well I do know a bit about, which gets even more complicated because you get agencies like [agency C] and God knows who else who come into that equation. So local authorities contract there and this first agency had actually lost the contract with this authority.

Validated by Jenny

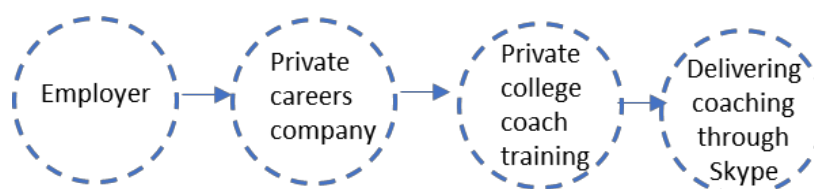
The extract provides evidence of a complex intermediary system operating in the supply of compliance checked public sector professionals. Furthermore, it situates senior level relationships across public sector and market organisations at the heart of the system, ultimately setting the direction of Jenny's fall between the cracks. As a result, leading to her transition into economic inactivity, or being between contracts, whilst providing family care.

Meanwhile, Helen's management grade had entitled her to support from a private careers company. She had attended a number of their courses and received personal support from a coach. She had not found the courses particularly helpful, however, her personal coach had drawn on his personal contacts to help her with attending a private training course offering qualifications in coaching, as she described:

But then I think private careers company was useful, if it hadn't been for the private careers company then my coach wouldn't have put me in touch with the Coaching Culture at Work people, which opened another avenue (Helen Transcript data interview two)

The following Figure 34 (p.195) captures her description of this more traditional careers and education intermediary system.

FIGURE 34 TRADITIONAL CAREERS AND EDUCATION INTERMEDIARY SYSTEM (TYPE SIX (A))



Source: Helen

By the third interview, Helen had found volunteer coaching boring and had decided to stop.

To sum up, these setting direction influences, in and of themselves, were not responsible for participants' transitions but appeared to nudge the direction of their transitions towards economic inactivity and care. A number of these influences were perceived by participants as setting direction influences, such as their references to the stress of coping with the UK's transport network and concerns about the quality of state care provision. In contrast, being required to choose the retired category for car insurance purposes was noted as annoying, but not perceived as an influence towards premature retirement. References to intermediary systems included Jane's ex-work colleagues (social intermediaries: Type 1 (a)) supporting her with finding casual paid hours. Jenny, meanwhile, had provided an account of falling between the cracks of a more complex market and public sector intermediary (Type 2 (b)). Meanwhile, Helen provided an account of a private careers company that had provided her with training to become a coach (Type 6 (a)).

6.2.4 Accommodation influences

The accommodation influences, presented in this section, will include references to identity, managing money and the influence of online platforms. Starting with identity, it had been Jane's husband who had encouraged her to adopt an identity of 'employed' to accommodate and manage her thinking about providing unpaid care.

...it was my husband's suggestion, he said why don't you think of your mother as being a job, then you won't feel so bad about not going to work? (Jane transcript data from interview one)

Her third story had been about the relief she had felt after deciding to adopt the identity of retired, as presented in the following extract.

Jane Extract from Story Three

In interview one, Jane had seemed unsure of her of work identity, as she stated:

I'm voluntarily... I suppose uuhm, I wouldn't call myself unemployed, but I'm not working by choice at the moment, but there are issues that influence that choice [caring for her Mum].

In interview two, her car insurance clerk asked her for her employment status. She had found the question really challenging – was she employed part-time, retired or a housewife? Maybe even semi-retired, but the insurance clerk made the decision for her - drawing on her pension means she is retired, as stated:

I don't know if I'm part-time, retired, a housewife – I don't...and she defined me as retired, because I'm drawing a pension. I feel I am semi-retired because I am still doing a bit of work and I think my definition of a proper job would be a full-time job that you've got to do because you've got a mortgage, whereas, my job at the garden centre isn't a proper job, because it's something I like doing.

In Interview three, Jane appeared to be more certain of her work status, but then wobbled later:

I've arrived, I think arrived at the end of the transition and this is me now, and I'm quite happy.

And later:

Yes, because your job is part of your identity, isn't it? You see them on the quiz shows, on the TV, and oh, tell us a bit about yourself, and it's, oh, I'm a retired teacher or I'm a retired this, a retired... no, you're not a retired teacher, you're not a teacher anymore because you're retired, that's what I always think. But she obviously wants people to know what she used to do, and it's a bit of social standing, do you think?

Similarly, Jenny had drawn on different identities to help her accommodations to economic inactivity and caring. The extract below captures the way she drew on carers allowance to explain her official identity whilst reassuring herself that she might return to contracting.

...yes I can adjust finances. I can just adjust the finances for a period of time really and I would be entitled as far as I understand it to carers allowance which isn't a lot but that would be my official activity at the moment and my company will go into non-trading now. It is flexible enough for me to pick up again should circumstances change again. (Jenny transcript data from interview three)

The above also captures Jenny's reflection on accommodating to a reduced income. Similarly, Jane had been concerned about living on her reduced pension, later describing how she had deliberately stopped herself making more impulsive purchases. By her third interview, however, she had been relieved to find they were financially managing, discovering that even the more expensive vacuum cleaner was within their price range.

Accommodation influences, supporting Helen's move into economic inactivity, included access to various online platforms. Access to the internet had enabled her to keep in touch with ex-work colleagues and monitor opportunities in her sector, although she was not actively searching for work. Online platforms had also helped her accommodate to living overseas and economic inactivity.

To sum up, accommodation influences, supporting transition into economic inactivity, had included the adoption of various identities other than unemployed. Some had maintained the belief that they would be returning to work. All were, to a greater or lesser event, adapting and learning to manage on more limited and lower

incomes. Interestingly, access to online resources – Skype for coaching, keeping in touch with friends and online job search platforms – had helped ease Helen into accommodating to living outside the UK. By her third interview, however, she had been happy to end her coaching through Skype.

6.2.5 Locking influences

In the context of no available trusted local care provision, Jenny and Jane had both become locked into caring and economic inactivity. Jenny had gone on to describe a further public sector and market intermediary system that had locked her out of returning to contracting. Drawing on STF concepts, Jenny's locked out experience is described in more detail next.

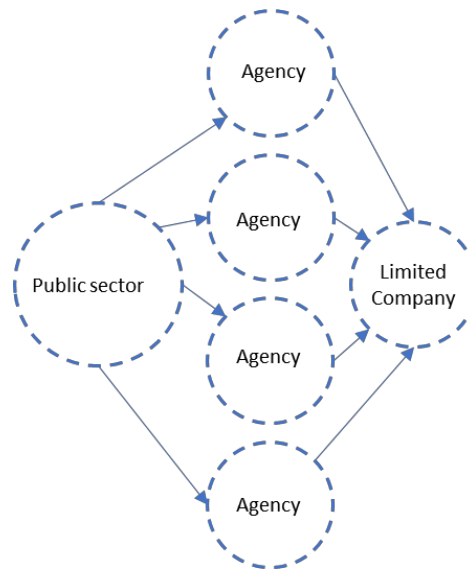
Jenny had been a limited company contracting through agencies to deliver her compliance checked public sector professional service. Lock influences, holding her into contracting, were discerned at every level of the STF. In the past, her long-term contracting had involved continuous interruptions in pension contributions (past organisation, and present and future financial systems) meaning she would have to continue contracting. Being single had excluded her from any income contributions from a partner (social and financial systems), again requiring her to carry on contracting. Relocating to deliver contracts had compromised her local social networks (organisation, social and geographical systems) leaving her dependent on public sector and market intermediaries for contracts. On the positive side, being a long-term contractor had supported her with learning how to manage complex intermediary systems (organisation and individual systems). As Jenny's elderly relative's care needs had increased, she had felt less certain about the quality of state care provision in her mother's local community. At the same time, she had slipped through the net of relationships between her preferred agency and consultant, described earlier in the section on setting direction influences. In the third

interview, she had provided insights into the barriers she had faced in her attempts to find a part-time local contract, to support her wish to continue to provide care. The extract below describes how three different agencies had called her about the same local contract and the employer's decision to screen out contractors wishing to work part-time:

...it was a local job, I had three agencies call me on a Friday afternoon...because a job had come out...three agencies phoned me because it was a local job...but in the end I agreed with one agency to put my details forward and I know the same manager was behind it and she actually came back... "No, we will interview the people who can do full time first... (Jenny transcript data from interview three)

Barriers to gaining access to ongoing local part time contracting, whilst caring, might be described as a lock out of contracting and a lock into caring. The structure of multiple agencies contacting a potential contractor for a single vacancy is picked up as an additional intermediary structure, represented in Figure 35 (p.201), next.

FIGURE 35 MARKET AND PUBLIC SECTOR INTERMEDIARY (TYPE TWO (H))



Source: Jenny

Unfortunately, in the context of needing to provide care at home, Jenny had been unable to accommodate to the market and public sector intermediary systems demand for flexible working (geographically and socially) and had been locked out of contracting.

To sum up, the need to provide family care would appear to have locked Jane and Jenny into economic inactivity. Jenny's story also revealed the way public sector and market intermediary systems came to lock her out of contracting, as she slipped between the cracks of a market and public sector intermediary system whilst being excluded by another.

6.2.6 Absent influences

Influences noted by their absence had been a lack of trusted care provision for older relatives (Jenny and Jane), and the means by which Jenny might have challenged the public sector employer that had screened her out of a local contract. She had been screened out by virtue of their preference for only interviewing full-time contractors first.

6.2.7 Summary of findings

A key finding arising from these transition stories were the range of identities assumed by the women to avoid the label of unemployed or economically inactive, including retired, semi-retired, carer, housewife, between contracts and carer. It is notable that transition, setting direction, accommodation and lock influences were all discerned in shaping their transitions and identities. Transition influences had included challenging public sector conditions, being able to afford to give up work and the need to provide family care. Setting direction influences had included the challenges of UK transport networks increasing the time to get to relatives in need, concerns about the state of care provision, being classified as retired by wider organisations, the influence of husbands (social intermediaries), and, in Jenny's case, falling between the cracks of a complex market and public sector intermediary system. Accommodation influences had included drawing on different identities to adjust to economic inactivity, learning to manage a change in income, and the value of online platforms to continue social interactions whilst overseas. Lock influences had included the need to provide care in the face of no other provision, or provision that could be trusted, and the barriers faced in accessing local part time contracts. Absent influences had included the lack of trusted state care and knowledge of rights with regard to indirect discrimination (see Helen's story of being described as a "little girl"). Finally, Jenny's story had also revealed the challenges faced by long-

term public-sector contractors seeking local part time contracts through market and public sector intermediary systems, when needing to provide more care at home.

6.3 BEING HELD IN TRANSITION

Despite being held or suspended in transition, Liz, Sally and Chantelle's stories continued to reveal a number of intermediary systems. These stories are presented next, starting with Liz's story.

Liz had been a single woman, in her early fifties and financially responsible for herself. Two years earlier, the offer of a combined Local Government career break and a scholarship for a postgraduate course could not have come at a more opportune moment. Her council manager job had been about to undergo another round of restructuring and the career break had provided an escape. She had returned to university as a postgraduate student, with two more years of scholarship funding to go. In the meantime, she was concentrating on developing her university networks, regularly checking the university's vacancy pages and had hoped she would secure a job before the end of her course. During her research, she remained at university whilst attending a few training days at her council, a requirement of the career break. She had come to perceive her local university as both her employer (furnishing her with a scholarship), educator and a potential intermediary for future jobs into higher education. She had described how the university had helped her "*shed the skin*" of her old council identity to become a doctoral student. In this respect, university had been an intermediary system involved in locking her into a period of economic inactivity.

In contrast, three years earlier, Sally had finished her Masters qualification, and, despite assurances from the university, had failed to transition into a job. The course had been presented as the entrance to a “pipeline” into health sector observatory work, but, at the end of her third year, the NHS Observatories had been closed. Sally had gone on to become distracted by family demands, especially in the context of her husband’s demanding career. It had been relatively comfortable for her to drift back into domestic work; she had been caring for her four children and elderly parents. At the end of the first interview, Sally happened to mention that her mental health team had arranged a meeting for her with a charity that helped people return to work whilst managing a mental health condition. By the second interview, the charity had organised some voluntary work for her in a school, with the idea that she should become a Maths teacher. She had also attended the charity’s two-week course based at her local Jobcentre. During the course, one of the charity trainers had informed the Jobcentre that one of her fellow attendees had turned down the offer of a job, so they had threatened his benefit. In protest, Sally and her fellow course members had walked out and set up their own self-help group; she had also given up her volunteering because she had never wanted to be a Maths teacher.

By Sally’s third interview, she had contacted the NHS mental health team to see if there were any other charities that might help her search for work, preferably with no connections to a Jobcentre. Figure 36 (p.205), that follows, captures the NHS, charity and Jobcentre intermediary system that had set her in the direction of unpaid volunteering.

FIGURE 36 CHARITY AND PUBLIC SECTOR INTERMEDIARY SYSTEM (TYPE FIVE (A))



Source: Sally

Finally, Chantelle had been a teacher in her early fifties. Throughout the research, she had been doing bits of irregular work: a few hours of teaching for a school and some tutoring in the evening that she had not perceived as proper jobs. From our first meeting, she had been planning to apply for proper teaching jobs, but the plan had been continuously postponed. Her reasons for postponing job seeking had included her husband's increased workload pressure, her subsequent responsibility for various family issues and needing to always be available, in her words, as the "*family standby*". In the first interview, she was managing the estate of her recently deceased mother-in-law, sourcing accommodation for one of her daughters living in London and preparing herself for a stay in hospital whilst continuing to be responsible for all domestic work. In the second interview, she was recovering from her operation whilst still managing to carry on delivering casual tutoring through Skype. In the third interview, she was doing less tutoring, meanwhile, her other daughter had started to need her help with sourcing accommodation. Once again, she pushed back the date for when she was going to search for "proper" teaching jobs.

To sum up, throughout the research Sally and Chantelle had described how all domestic and family work had defaulted to them, primarily, because their husbands' had been in demanding careers . Both participants made efforts to search for work, but neither had been under any financial pressure to find a job. Sally and Liz had described the influences of universities as intermediary systems holding them in transition. Whether or not Liz's investment in a postgraduate qualification would offer a suitable return was still unclear, but, unlike Sally and Chantelle, as single woman she was taking a significant financial risk in postponing her return to paid work. Finally, Sally had referred to an NHS, Jobcentre and charity intermediary system that had encouraged her to do some voluntary work: against her better judgement. In the absence of impartial careers advice, or any kind of career planning, it is difficult to understand the value of such an investment.

6.4 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER FINDINGS

This chapter has presented five relevant findings: firstly, despite all seven participants being too young to access their newly raised state pensions, none had identified themselves as economically inactive and or unemployed. Instead, they had adopted identities of retired, semi-retired, carer, between contracts, being a family standby, being on a career break, a student and a volunteer. Secondly, during the course of the study, six of the seven participants were committing significant amounts of time to domestic and family care work. Their care work had included supporting older children and meeting the needs of elderly family relatives. The challenges of caring for more elderly relatives had included needing to meet their unpredictable needs, in the context of not being unable to trust the quality of local care provision. The stress created by concerns for elderly relatives had acted as significant influences shaping Jane and Jenny's transitions into economic inactivity. Thirdly, participants transitioning into economic inactivity had all perceived similar transition, setting direction, accommodation and lock influences. Fourthly,

participants had provided evidence of social intermediary, and market and public sector intermediary systems shaping transitions into economic inactivity and, in some cases, holding them there. Fifthly, Jenny's story had provided evidence of the challenges faced by those in long-term public-sector contracting, when needing to provide care at home.

To conclude, these transition stories could be described as the premature ending of participants' public sector careers. Examples of these transitions had included moving into one-off casual paid hours (seasonal work), unpaid domestic household work, unpaid family care work and unpaid transition work (volunteering, a career break whilst studying and more general job seeking). There had been no single influence shaping these transitions rather configurations of influences situated across the STF with intermediary systems exerting setting direction, accommodation and locking influence. Various identities other than unemployed or economically inactive, were deployed by participants, to help them cope with accommodating to mainly unpaid domestic and care work. On the one hand, women living with husbands, and able to afford to stop work despite pension penalties, had been able to draw on the identity of retired. On the other hand, Jenny and Liz, both single women, had been unable to afford to give up work. Jenny had gone on to describe herself as a carer between contracts whilst Liz had called herself a student and had continued to search for new job opportunities.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE ROLE OF INTERMEDIARIES WITHIN AN EXTENDED SYSTEM THEORY FRAMEWORK

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter draws on all the thesis findings to address the research question outlined in Chapter One: *How do a group of UK older women (aged 50 to rising state pension age) perceive the influence of intermediaries on their work transition(s) during austerity?* It is addressed with the help of the thesis's interpretive and substantive theory supported by its extended STF, presented as Figure 38 (p.234). The original Patton and McMahon's (2014) STF is presented in Appendix 5 (p.276), and acts as a point of comparison to support claims that the extended STF theory makes a new theoretical contribution to knowledge. As well as presenting findings about the nature of work, the concept of intermediary is reconceptualised as an intermediary system with transition, setting direction and lock influences on those transitions. Participants' patterns of transition are also represented; although, wider literature also refers to a number of these transitions, making the claim that they all make new contributions to knowledge less certain.

Focusing on the research question, the first part of the chapter draws on the research findings to elaborate on the concepts of work, transition and perception. The next part focuses on how the original STF had needed to be extended to represent all the research findings. The final part concludes by answering the research question and confirming the research's new and original contributions to knowledge.

7.2 RETURNING TO THE RESEARCH QUESTION

Key concepts deployed by the research question are clarified in this section. These are presented under the subheadings of work, transition and perception.

7.2.1 Elucidating on the concept of work

In Chapter Two, Richardson and Schaeffer (2012, 2013) had called for the concept of work to be reconceptualised as market and unpaid care work. Evidence from this research will extend the concept to include unpaid transition work, unpaid and paid market work, and unpaid domestic and care work. Drawing on the research findings, these types of work are expanded upon in the following list, whilst also noting the involvement of intermediary systems.

- *Unpaid transition work* included a range of job seeking activities, some of which involved engaging with intermediary systems. For example, Samantha was encouraged by a charity and public sector intermediary system (Type 5 (a)) to engage in voluntary work in a school, with the hope of it leading to a job. Samantha and Clare described having coffee with friends/ex-work colleagues, also referred to as social intermediary systems (Type 1(a)), in the hope of converting coffee chats into contract offers. Clare noted that conversions of friends into social intermediary systems also resulted in some friendships taking collateral damage. All participants found transition work fatiguing, and some had become emotionally upset as they described repeatedly failing job interviews (see Dawn and Harriet's stories).
- *Unpaid market work* arose in interactions with Type two market and public sector intermediary systems, and included travelling between contracts, administration time spent on confirming compliance requirements – including those required of professional bodies, organising payment arrangements, converting to a limited company and engaging an accountant. For example,

Eleanor spent significant time on all these activities, after experiencing a public sector's revolving door transition.

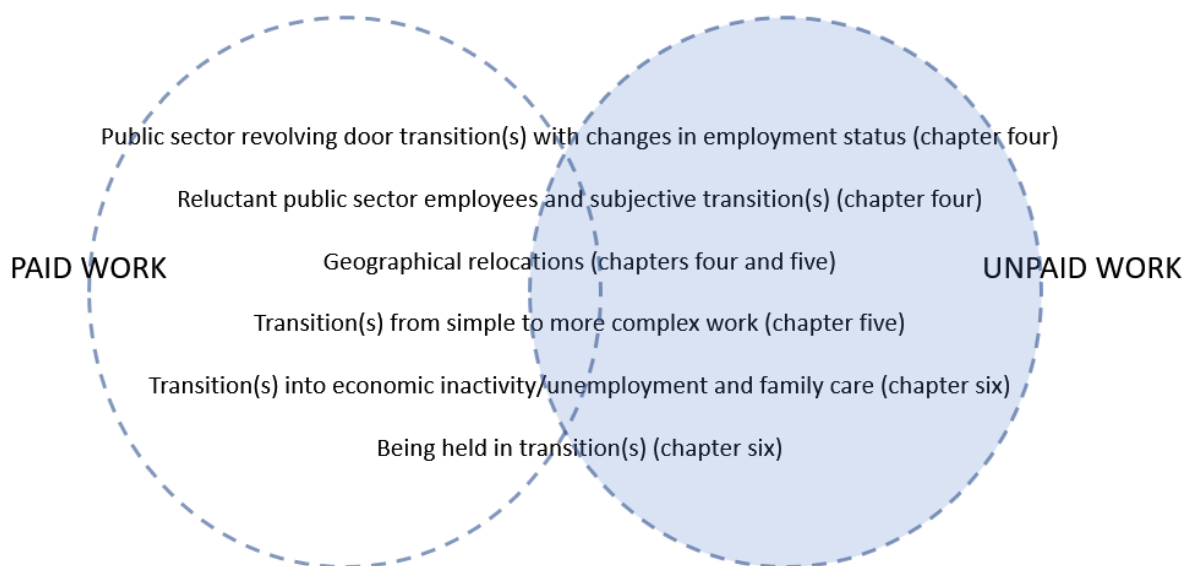
- *Paid market work* included several kinds of work, for example compliance and non-compliance agency contract work that involved engagement with market and public sector intermediary systems (Type 2). Casual work included Jane's seasonal garden centre work that required engagement with a Type one social intermediary system (Type 1(a)). Only Sarah transitioned into a permanent employee contract, after relocating and gaining support from her husband, an example of a Type one social intermediary system. Kaz and her family engaged with a Type three market and social intermediary system (Type 3 (b)) to become a family business, whilst Rebecca engaged with a traditional careers and education intermediary system (Type 6 (c)), to set herself up as a self-employed intermediary system business.
- *Unpaid domestic and care work* included cleaning, shopping and preparing meals. Examples of care work included caring for school age children, older children, grandchildren, elderly parents and wider family members – sometimes in combination. In general, all participants engaged in domestic work, although Clare and Helen received extra help by paying for cleaners. In contrast, Dawn, Fiona, Samantha and Kate had done extra domestic work based on adult children still living at home. The fatigue of combining paid work with the increasing care demands of elderly relatives had contributed to Jane and Jenny's exhaustion, followed by transitions into economic inactivity and care. Jane's transition had been supported by her husband, a social intermediary system (Type 1 (b)), and Jenny's transition had involved slipping through a complex market and public sector intermediary system (Type 2 (c)).

To conclude, findings from the research, about the nature of work and transitions into different kinds of working patterns, had involved a variety of complex intermediary systems.

7.2.2 Elucidating on the concept of transition

Moving on to the concept of transition, the evidence had pointed to participants being required, if not forced, to exit their public sector organisations and move into transition(s). Their resulting patterns of transitions had included the following: public sector revolving door transitions with changes in employment status; reluctant employees undergoing subjective transitions; geographical relocations; transitions from simple to complex working; and transitions into economic inactivity and care. These patterns of transition, across paid and unpaid work, are summarised in Figure 37, below:

FIGURE 37 PARTICIPANTS' PATTERNS OF TRANSITION(S)



Source: Author

The literature presented in Chapter Two, touches on some of the previous research's findings about participants' transitions. For example, Lorretto and Vickerstaff's study (2012) had identified the importance of the 'couple' in decisions about

transitions into retirement. Similarly, Sally and Chantelle had both made couples' decisions accepting that, in the context of husbands' busy careers (both self-employed contractors), all domestic and care work should default to them. Kaz and Sarah had also made couples' decisions to relocate, in order to address their husbands' chronic job insecurities. Finally, Ruth and Eleanor had made couples' decisions to enter the public sector's revolving door, following in their respective partners' footsteps.

Moving on to consider the reluctant employees' who underwent subjective transitions. Bimrose (2015) had also noted the importance of subjective career in shaping her participants' transitions: the way in which cultural influences and values had shaped their sense of responsibility for meeting family needs. In the case of this research, subjective transitions were evidenced as changes in attitude towards the job. For example, Joanne had started out describing how she had always loved her job, and this changed to wanting to leave, as she states:

...I'm becoming more aware of the fact I really want to go. (Joanne transcript data from interview three)

In the case of transitions to complex work, then Gabriel and colleagues (2013) and Simosi and colleagues (2015) had also noted the phenomenon of complex work described by them as 'bricolage': the sewing together of different bits and pieces of paid and unpaid transition work. Their studies, however, had not included the sewing of unpaid domestic and care work into the bricolage, described in participants' accounts of simple to complex transitions.

Duberly and Carmichael's (2016) study of 28 UK older women, aged 55-76, had suggested the existence of preconstructed retirement pathways of enabled, vulnerable and constrained. Although not focusing on public sector transitions,

their study had offered insights into how transitions in this study had placed participants onto enabled, constrained and vulnerable pathways crossing fuzzy lines of retirement. For example, their categories of portfolio workers and fragmented career workers were similar to revolving door, and simple to complex work transitions, both of which could be described as vulnerable pathways. The authors, however, did not elucidate on transitions in employment status or the role played by intermediary systems.

In the case of revolving door transitions, Coulter (2016, p.204), almost as an aside, had referred to teaching unions providing Parliament with evidence that, between 2008 and 2013, employee jobs across the education sector had risen by five percent whilst numbers of self-employed jobs in the sector had risen by 58 per cent³⁴, with no explanation of how this had been happening. Cribb, Disney and Sibietta (2014) had also noted how the National Health Service (NHS) and the education sector were experiencing unprecedented level of outsourcing, with elements of public service work being delivered through “private sector agencies” (Ibid, 2014, p.22), but, again, presented no further detail of how this had happened. Finally, a Fawcett Society report (2014), had noted the significant rise, from June 2013 to June 2014, in women’s self-employment figures (2014, p.8). None of these studies, however, described how this had been happening. Participants’ experiences of public sector revolving door transitions, with changes in employment status, have addressed this gap in knowledge.

With regard to transitions into economic inactivity, then Phillipson and colleagues (2016) had known LFS data had shown rising numbers of women entering economic

³⁴ Written evidence given to the House of Lords Select Committee on Personal Service Companies, 2013 and cited by Coulter (2016, p. 204) as evidence for self-employed workers returning to education via agencies.

inactivity and they had been suspicious that some of these women were being forced into economic inactivity. Again, participants' stories, of transitions into economic inactivity and care, offer evidence to support their hypothesis. Finally, Bluestein and colleagues' (2013) study of narratives, to cope with job loss, offer insights into the coping narratives adopted by participants in this research, experiencing being held in transition, or unemployment.

To sum up, participants' patterns of transition offer insight into the complexity of the concept of transition and the involvement of intermediary systems in shaping transition. Literature in Chapter Two was found to touch on a number of these transitions, although not experiences of transitions in employment status, supporting the claim that only this pattern makes a new contribution to knowledge.

7.2.3 Elucidating on the concept of perception

Moving on to the research question's concept of perceptions, participants appeared to have two levels of perception. In the first, they were able to describe the effects of an influence and name it. For example, Ruth named her husband, also a public sector contracting teacher, as an influence shaping her decision to engage with agencies for the same work. The second level of perception had been where a participant could describe the effect of an influence but was unable to ascribe the effect to a named influence. An example might be where participants had unquestioningly assumed responsibility for family care whilst being unaware of the influence of norms for providing that care.

7.2.4 Summary of findings

To sum up, the concept of work has been redefined as unpaid transition work, unpaid and paid market work, and unpaid domestic and care work. The concept of transition has been extended to include abstract versions of change, for example in subjective attitudes towards work and change in employment status. Several patterns of transition were discerned, with wider literature referencing them all except public sector revolving door transitions with change in employment status.

7.3 EXTENDING THE SYSTEM THEORY FRAMEWORK

Patton and McMahon's (2006, 2014) original STF figure, presented in Appendix 5 (p.276), represented the theory's ontological explanation of the nature of change in the social world: a series of socially constructed recursive, or feedback, mechanisms operating through time within environmental, organisational and individual open systems - all shaping change through time. They defined an open system as follows:

An open system is subject to influence from outside and may also influence that which is beyond its boundaries. Such interaction is termed recursiveness in the System Theory Framework and in diagrammatic form is depicted by broken lines that represent the permeability of the boundaries of each system (Patton, 2006, p.5).

Whilst the original STF, presented in Appendix 5, provided a useful analytical framework for analysing influences within individual, environmental and organisational systems, it failed to reflect the complex nature of work, intermediary systems and their influences on transition(s). Returning to the extended STF (Figure 38, p.234) in this thesis, the problem has been resolved by retaining the original

STF's time, individual and environment systems whilst incorporating a new intermediary and work system. Colour coding influences also identified their different effects: blue for a transition influence; green for a setting direction influence; orange for accommodation; and red for those lock influences contributing to locking in a change.

The structure of this section is divided into sub sections representing each of the new extended STF systems, noting those retained from the original STF and those added.

7.3.1 Individual system (retained from the original STF)

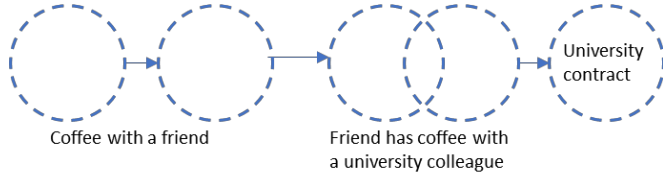
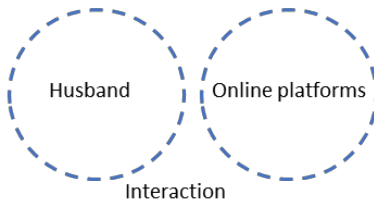
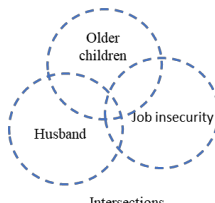
The original STF individual system included a range of influences such as gender, health, beliefs, age, interests, skills and knowledge. It did not include the sub-system influences of norms, identities, coping narratives, value clashes, geographical anchors, emotions and resilience, all identified in the stories of participants and added to the extended STF version. Examples of unperceived norms had included age norms around expectations of what should happen at particular ages, for example, too young or too old to retire, too young or too old to be retrained or use the internet, search for jobs and or be considered for particular types of jobs. Participants also revealed unperceived norms of taking responsibility for domestic (unpaid) work and, particularly, responsibility for family care. Unperceived identities also acted as powerful influences too. For example, occupational identities retained job search focus on previous public sector careers (see Simosi et al., 2015). There was also evidence of contractor identity replacing professional identity to support accommodations to contracting outside professional boundaries. Identities of semi-retired, retired, between contracts and carer also contributed to coping narratives (Blustein et al., 2013) that supported accommodations to economic inactivity/unemployment and caring. Further perceived sub-system influences included professional values that went on to clash with public sector organisations

adopting more commercial business models (see Cohen and Duberly, 2015), perceptions of geographical anchors and awareness of emotional states as well as levels of resilience.

7.3.2 Intermediary system (new system)

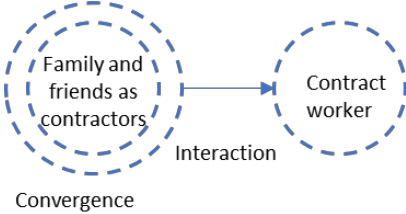
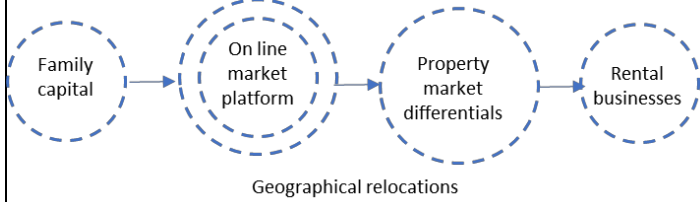
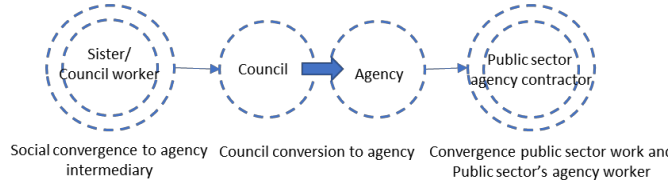
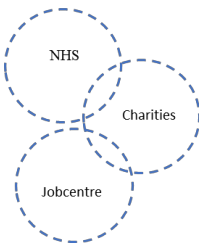
The intermediary system is a new contribution to the STF. The literature review presumed intermediaries to be single entities operating between workers and their work (Benner, 2002; Bessy and Chauvin, 2014; Bosley et al., 2009; Cohen, 2014; Enright, 2013). In contrast, the intermediaries presented in Table 14 (pp.218-223) confirm them to be interactions, intersections, convergences and conversions of multiple entities with transition, setting direction, accommodation and lock system influences on transitions.

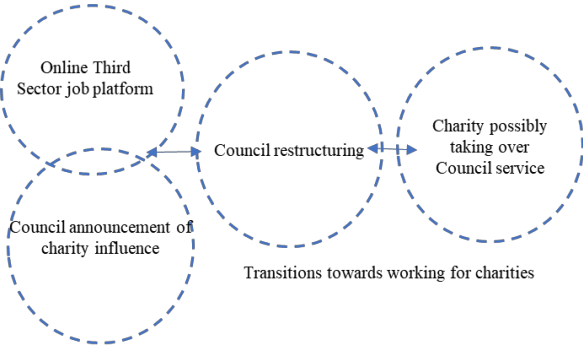
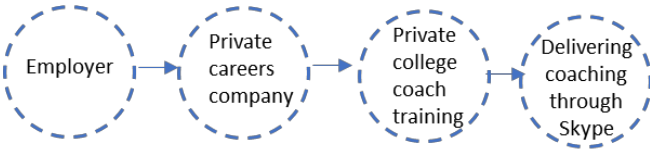
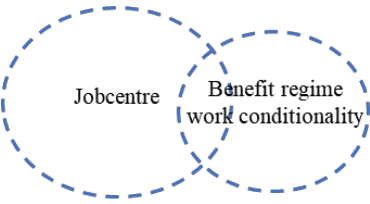
TABLE 14 INTERMEDIARY SYSTEMS

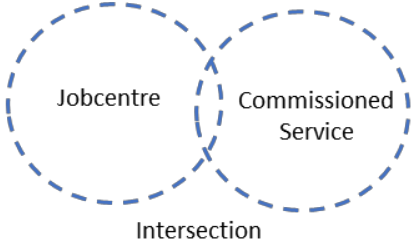
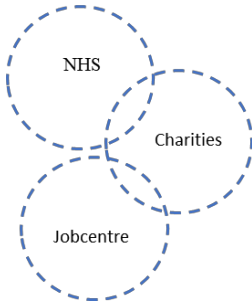
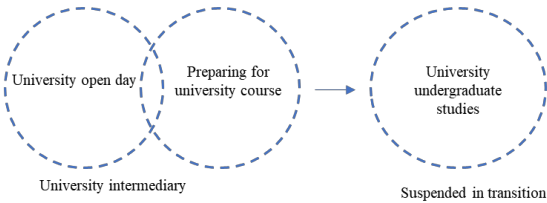
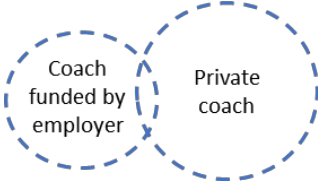
TYPE	INTERMEDIARY SYSTEM STRUCTURES	EFFECTS AND ILLUSTRATION
Type 1. Social intermediary systems		
1 (a) Ex-work colleagues provide introductions to key public sector managers for jobs		<p>TRANSITION INTO COMPLEX WORKING</p> <p>Chapter Five Clare's story of accessing one of a number of contracts.</p> <p>Chapter Six Ex-work colleagues set Jane in the direction of casual hours at a garden centre.</p>
1 (b) Husband identifies online vacancies and provides coaching support		<p>TRANSITION INTO RELOCATION</p> <p>Chapter Four Sarah's husband drew on online platforms to support their relocation and to support her into an employee role</p> <p>ACCOMODATION TO CARE</p> <p>Chapter Six Jane's husband had supported her with accommodating to care by describing care as a job.</p>
1 (c) Husband and adult children shape choice of public sector job applications		<p>TRANSITION INTO COMPLEX WORKING (EMPLOYEE CONTRACTING AND CARE)</p> <p>Chapter Five Kate's family require her help and this shapes her transition</p>

Type 2 Market and public sector intermediary systems		
2 (a) In the context of agency and umbrella company relationship, the contractor adopts limited company status and seeks the help of an accountant		<p>TRANSITION INTO COMPLIANCE CONTRACTING AS A LIMITED COMPANY</p> <p>Chapter Four Beth, Dawn and Eleanor transition from agency contract worker status to limited company status</p>
2 (b) Contract worker is required to adopt limited company status to contract with agency on a public sector organisation's preferred list		<p>LOCKED INTO COMPLIANCE BASED CONTRACTING AS A LIMITED COMPANY</p> <p>Chapter Four Beth had been required to convert to Ltd to be able to contract.</p>
2 (c) Public sector organisation outsources its hiring function to a private management company who has a preferred list of agencies. to furnish professional workers.		<p>LOCKED OUT OF COMPLIANCE CONTRACTING AND SETTING DIRECTION TOWARDS ECONOMIC INACTIVITY AND CARE</p> <p>Chapter Six Jenny slips through then net when her preferred agency ceases to be on the management company's preferred list.</p>
2 (d) Worker benefits from agency employment consultant's informal relationships with public sector employer manager		<p>SETTING DIRECTION TOWARDS COMPLIANCE CONTRACTING</p> <p>Chapter Four Dawn highlighted informal relationships between public sector managers and consultants</p>

2 (e) Professionals subject to rigorous compliance checks cannot contract directly without being compliance checked.	<pre> graph LR G[Government compliance] --> A[Agency confirms compliance] P[Professional body compliance] --> A A --> C[Contract worker or Limited Company] C --> S[Compliance checked services to Public sector] </pre>	LOCKED INTO COMPLIANCE CONTRACTING Chapter Four Eleanor, Ruth and Dawn require compliance checking by agencies.
2 (f) Agency places worker with public sector employer	<pre> graph LR A[Agency] --> PS[Public sector] PS --> CW[Contract worker] </pre>	TRANSITION INTO COMPLEX WORKING Chapter Five Clare is placed into a school by an agency that has no lock influence.
2 (g) Agency places worker with public sector employer who further subcontracts worker	<pre> graph LR A[Agency] --> C[College] C --> CO[College acts as agency and further subcontracts out] CO --> O[Community organisations] </pre> <p>Agency interacts with college Agency and college sub-contract out worker</p>	TRANSITION INTO COMPLEX WORKING Chapter Five Samantha is further subcontracted out to a different organisation.
2 (h) Public sector sends out single vacancy through multiple agencies	<pre> graph TD PS[Public sector] --- A1[Agency] PS --- A2[Agency] PS --- A3[Agency] PS --- A4[Agency] A1 --- LC[Limited Company] A2 --- LC A3 --- LC A4 --- LC </pre>	LOCKED OUT OF COMPLIANCE CONTRACTING Chapter Six Jenny managed several agencies for the same contract
2 (i) Self-employed public sector and market intermediary where charity is a market focused organisation	<pre> graph LR CH[Charity] --> G[Government funding for projects] PSA[Private sector associate] --> G PS[Public sector] --> G G --> CDM[Charity and market delivery of projects] </pre>	TRANSITIONED INTO COMPLEX WORKING Chapter Five Rebecca decides to become a self-employed intermediary facilitating partnerships for bidding for Government funds to deliver public sector projects

Type 3. Market and social intermediary systems		
3 (a) Family members are also agency contractors working in the public sector and recommend and role model contracting		<p>SETTING DIRECTION TOWARDS COMPLIANCE CONTRACTING</p> <p>Chapter Four Ruth, Eleanor and Dawn encouraged by family agency contractors</p>
3 (b) Family capital, online platforms and property market differentials lead to rental businesses and working		<p>TRANSITION INTO COMPLEX WORKING</p> <p>Chapter Five Kaz relocates to take advantage of employment and market differences</p>
Type 4. Social and public sector intermediary systems		
4 (a) Sister sends an email about Council HR department converting to operating like an agency		<p>NEW: SETTING DIRECTION INTO CONTRACTING</p> <p>Chapter Four Harriet's sister forwards an email about the Council becoming an agency</p>
Type 5. Charity and public sector intermediary systems		
5 (a) NHS and Jobcentre delivers services through charities		<p>SETTING DIRECTION TOWARDS ECONOMIC INACTIVITY OR BEING SUSPEND IN TRANSITION</p> <p>Chapter Six Louise had been employed by a charity and delivering her service through a Doctors practice.</p> <p>Chapter six Sally finds out her charity has passed on personal information to the Jobcentre</p>

<p>5 (b) Charity takes over a Council service advertises for staff on an online charity jobs platform</p>		<p>NEW: SETTING DIRECTION TOWARDS THE THIRD SECTOR</p> <p>Chapter Four Fiona is interested in applying for Third Sector jobs during her Council's negotiation for a charity takeover of her service.</p>
<p>Type 6. Traditional careers and education intermediary systems</p>		
<p>6 (a) Private careers company leads to private college offering training in executive coaching</p>		<p>NEW: SETTING DIRECTION TOWARDS COACHING THROUGH SKYPE</p> <p>Chapter Five Beth trains to be an executive coach</p> <p>Chapter Six Helen accesses support from a private careers company and is forwarded to a private college for training in becoming an executive coach</p>
<p>6 (b) Jobcentre leads to Kate accepting her first job offer</p>		<p>LOCKED OUT OF HELP AND INTO ACCEPTING A FIRST JOB OFFER</p> <p>Chapter Four Harriet finds the Jobcentre unhelpful and does not return</p> <p>Chapter Five Kate is expected to accept the first job offer</p>

6 (c) Jobcentre requires attendance on a commissioned course to access New Enterprise Allowance (NEA)	 <p>A Venn diagram with two overlapping dashed circles. The left circle is labeled 'Jobcentre' and the right circle is labeled 'Commissioned Service'. The overlapping area in the center is labeled 'Intersection'.</p>	<p>NEW: TRANSITION INTO BECOMING AN INTERMEDIARY</p> <p>Chapter Five Rebecca attends a course to access NEA</p>
6 (d) Charities delivering intermediary function on behalf of NHS and Jobcentre for clients managing mental health disabilities.	<p>*Also referred to in Type 5 charity and public sector</p>  <p>A Venn diagram with three overlapping dashed circles. The top circle is labeled 'NHS', the bottom-left circle is labeled 'Jobcentre', and the bottom-right circle is labeled 'Charities'.</p>	<p>SETTING DIRECTION TOWARDS VOLUNTEERING</p> <p>Chapter Six Sally engages with voluntary work, but later rejects charity after observing them informing on someone who had turned down an offer of a job.</p>
6 (e) University open day results in paying to attend a preparation for undergraduate studies course	 <p>A flow diagram showing a sequence of three dashed circles. The first circle on the left is labeled 'University open day' with 'University intermediary' written below it. An arrow points from this circle to a second circle in the middle labeled 'Preparing for university course'. Another arrow points from the second circle to a third circle on the right labeled 'University undergraduate studies' with 'Suspended in transition' written below it.</p>	<p>TRANSITION AND LOCK INFLUENCE</p> <p>Chapter Four Fiona engages with a university adviser and pays for a 'preparing for university' course.</p> <p>Chapter Six Liz is on a career break from her council and had received a scholarship to support a doctorate.</p>
6 (f) A private coach funded by a public sector employer	 <p>A Venn diagram with two overlapping dashed circles. The left circle is labeled 'Coach funded by employer' and the right circle is labeled 'Private coach'.</p>	<p>TRANSITION INFLUENCE</p> <p>Chapter Five Clare's coach had been funded by her employer. Her coach had supported her with her exit strategy.</p>

The extended STF intermediary systems consist of the types of intermediary systems referenced in this Table.

Of course, the outstanding issue is to clearly define an intermediary system. The challenge of formulating such a definition is how to hold together all the complex information concerning patterns of transition, intermediary systems involved in those transitions and the accommodations required to sustain transition(s). The complexity of this information can only be represented in a Table, as presented in Table 15 (p.225-226).

TABLE 15 INTERMEDIARY SYSTEM INFLUENCE AND ACCOMMODATIONS

Types of transition	Intermediary system influence on transition	Accommodations made by participants	Benefits to the intermediary/intermediary systems
The public sector revolving door transition and change in employment status	<p>Type 2: Market and public sector 2 (a) <u>Transition into</u> compliance based contracting and then on to adopting Ltd company status 2 (b) <u>Locked into</u> compliance-based contracting as a Ltd company 2 (d) <u>Setting direction</u> towards compliance contracting 2 (e) <u>Locks into</u> compliance contracting</p> <p>Type 3: Market and social 3 (a) <u>Setting direction</u> towards compliance contracting</p> <p>Type 4: Social and public sector 4 (a) <u>Setting direction</u> into contracting with same employer</p> <p>Type 6: Traditional careers and education 6 (b) <u>Locked out</u> of Jobcentre help towards contracting</p>	<p>*Following agency rules *Accepting feeling of being an outsider *Displacing professional identity for contractor identity *Financial responsibility for training and development *Working more flexibly than desired *Unpaid market time managing umbrella companies and or limited company status *Financial/insurance risks when converting to limited company status *Accepting a lower grade job to remain with the organisation *Accepting the absence of impartial advice and guidance from the Jobcentre</p>	<p>*Market organisation receives payment for furnishing contractors whilst public sector manager circumvents recruitment processes and public sector organisations save money. *Husbands in contracting and their wives had hoped to gain more flexibility to synchronise more time together.</p>
Reluctant public sector employees and subjective transitions	<p>Type 6: Traditional careers and education 6 (e) <u>Locked into</u> 'preparing for university' course</p> <p>Type 5: Charity and public sector 5 (b) <u>Setting direction</u> towards working for the third sector</p>	<p>*Carrying on in public sector employment in the midst of ever more challenging working conditions *Personally, funding a 'preparing for university' course *Combining paid work with unpaid transition work in the search for alternative career opportunities</p>	<p>*University benefits from payments for its courses and it is a recruitment method for other courses. *Public sector organisations make savings if staff are recruited by charities to provide their services.</p>
Geographical relocation	<p>Type 1: Social intermediary 1 (b) <u>Transition into</u> a public sector employee contract</p>	<p>*Downsizing and moving nearer to London ** Note Kaz's family sell their home in London to start a rental business in the Midlands (Type 3b)</p>	<p>*Sarah's husband had also been under threat of redundancy and would have benefitted from being closer to London, if required to find another job.</p>

Simple to complex work transitions	<p>Type 1: Social intermediary 1 (a) <u>Transition into</u> a public sector contract 1 (c) Needs of contracting family lead to <u>transition into</u> complex domestic work Type 2: Market and public sector 2 (f) <u>Transitions into</u> a public sector contract that leads to a temporary maternity cover 2 (g) <u>Transitions into</u> a public sector organisation that <u>further sub-contracts</u> into an additional public sector organisations 2 (i) <u>Transitions into becoming</u> an intermediary market and public sector intermediary Type 3: Market and social 3 (b) <u>Transition into</u> a family rental business Type 6: Traditional careers and education 6 (b) <u>Locks into</u> accepting first job lead to becoming trapped in unsatisfactory work 6 (f) Private coach <u>transition</u> influence into complex work</p>	<p>*Acceptance of engaging in more unpaid transition work *Willingness to convert friendships into social intermediaries with some evidence of collateral damage *Learning to juggle more complex paid and unpaid arrangements of work *Exposure to financial risk in pursuit of independence and self-employment</p>	<p>*Social intermediaries benefitted from the pleasure of social engagement. They may have also hoped for some kind of reciprocation. *Family intermediary systems had arisen when husbands and wives had both been in chronic job insecurity. There had been nothing to lose in taking a risk. *Jobcentre's insistence on benefit claimants accepting the first job offer would have reduced payments, saving the Government money. *A private coach would have been paid for their services</p>
Transitions into economic inactivity and family care	<p>Type 1: Social intermediary 1 (b) <u>Accommodation</u> influence to full time care – imagining care as a job Type 2: Market and public sector 2 (c) <u>Locked out</u> of compliance contracting having slipped through the system 2(h) <u>Locked out</u> of compliance contracting by interviews for full timers first Type 6: Traditional careers and education 6 (a) <u>Setting direction</u> influence of a private careers company and private college</p>	<p>*Drawing on identities of semi-retired, retired, carer, housewife and between contracts to avoid economic inactivity and unemployment *Pension penalties incurred by accessing it early – learning to live on less *Online platforms had supported Helen with easing into exiting paid work</p>	<p>*Wider family members benefit from one family member caring for the elderly. *Agencies had locked out workers for which there was no demand. Retaining them would not be cost effective. *A private careers company had financially benefitted from the take up of places in their associated college.</p>

Cumulatively, the Table presents a new theoretical understanding of the concept of intermediary, as an intermediary system. Drawing on the evidence presented, the definition of an intermediary system is as follows:

Definition of an intermediary system: an intermediary system is a combination of informal and formal interactions, intersections, conversions and convergences of people, organisations and online platforms that mutually benefit from particular transition(s) in paid and unpaid work. An intermediary system operates in a wider context of influences and, similar to these wider contextual influences, has transition, setting direction, accommodation, lock (in or out) influence on transitions into paid and or unpaid work. In some cases, an intermediary system's influence can be mitigated by unique configurations of personal circumstances; for example, where there are sufficient funds to provide choice about whether to accept or reject various types of work.

7.3.3 Work system (new system added to the original STF)

The new work system comes next in the extended STF. The nature of participants' work has already been outlined above (see section 7.2), revealing work as unpaid transition work, unpaid and paid market work, and unpaid domestic and care work.

7.3.4 Environmental/social system (retained from the original STF)

Within its environment and social system, the original STF included sub-systems of political decisions, globalisation, historical trends, socio economic status and geographical locations. To integrate findings from this study, the environmental system was extended to include the sub-systems of policy, organisation (previously a system in its own right but detaching it from the nature of work), financial and social influences. In the sub-system of policy, participants referenced the following:

- raising the state pension age and references to being required to carry on working (see Joanne, Samantha, and Ruth's stories); and

- minimal agency regulations (see revolving door participants' descriptions of agency's rules, agency tacit threats and problems with agency payment systems).

None of the participants perceived Government austerity policies (Institute for Fiscal Studies, 2015; Heseltine, 2012; H.M. Treasury, 2013) responsible for either changes in their public sector organisations or subsequent transitions. Instead, they held their public sector organisations accountable for these experiences. In addition, none accessed any nationally funded impartial advice and guidance services or knew about the National Careers Service offer for supporting them with transition (Bowes et al., 2013). Several participants, however, described experiences of indirect discrimination, although made no reference to the Equalities Act and its protection against indirect discrimination³⁵. For example, Helen needed to cope with low level disparaging comments from a line manager, describing her as a *"little girl"* in an appraisal. Equally, Beth had felt devalued when male dominated meetings excluded her, by virtue of running meetings beyond their allocated time, when she had needed to leave and to pick up her daughter. Jenny also described attending a contractor interview to be told only full timers would be interviewed first, suggesting to her that part-timers and carers were being disqualified.

The sub-system of organisations has also included references to public sector organisations, such as universities (see Fiona, Liz and Sally), charities (see Fiona and Rebecca), organisations fronted through online platforms (see Kaz's use of online

³⁵ Discrimination which is against the Equality Act is unlawful. ... Indirect discrimination is when there's a practice, policy or rule which applies to everyone in the same way, but it has a worse effect on some people than others. The Equality Act says it puts you at a particular disadvantage. Citizens Advice web page <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/discrimination/what-are-the-different-types-of-discrimination/indirect-discrimination/> Accessed 14.12.19

property platforms and Sarah's use of job search platforms such as Indeed and Jobs.ac.uk), personal service or limited companies (Beth, Eleanor and Dawn, Rebecca), family business (Kaz's rental company), the Jobcentre and a private careers company, (see Hugh's (2013) concerns about the changing landscape of advice and guidance provision).

The financial sub-system is extended to include the influences of umbrella companies; different employment status and their tax treatments (also noted by Adam, Miller and Pope, 2017; Cribb, 2014; Coulter, 2016; Taylor et al., 2017); accountants; husbands' incomes; rental income; and various differentials across employment and property markets and their value. This final influence might be seen as a structural influence; for example, Sarah and her husband relocated to take advantage of employment market differentials, whilst Kaz and her husband relocated to take advantage of property value differentials.

The social sub-system influences centered around family and included marital and cohabiting status, caring responsibilities, family financial capital and job security, and were found to set the direction of transitions. For example, in the context of demanding levels of family domestic and care work and husbands in demanding but lucrative contracting work, then husbands set Sally and Chantelle in the direction of economic inactivity and care. In contrast, in the context of little or no domestic or care work then husbands delivering limited company compliance-based contracting through agencies, set Ruth and Eleanor in the direction of the same type of public sector contracting. However, Sarah and Kaz's husbands had been in non-compliance public sector jobs, setting both their families in the direction of more extreme geographical relocations - risking family financial capital in search of new employment opportunities. Increasing demand for family care, in the context of no care provision or untrusted care provision, also set Jane and Jenny in the direction of economic inactivity and care whilst Harriet moved into significant lower quality

council agency contracting. Meanwhile, Sally, Sarah and Liz had all been anticipating needing to provide more care to elderly relatives in the very near future.

7.3.5 Time System (retained from the original STF)

Moving out of the STF environment system, and into the time system, participants reflected on the numerous ways past decisions came to shape their present circumstances. Examples of these decisions included marriage, divorce, remarriage, leaving paid work to raise children, investing in training, shifting career paths, investing in optional occupational pension schemes and purchasing property. For each participant, these decisions became long running influences resulting in unique configurations of personal circumstances (see Bimrose et al. 2015; Loretto and Vickerstaff, 2012). Consequently, uniformly applied influences, for example policies raising the state pension age, were filtered through these unique personal circumstances, resulting in them being experienced in different ways.

7.3.6 Answering the research question

The research question, presented at the start of the chapter, referred to perceptions of influences shaping transitions. In extending the STF, perceptions of influences and intermediaries came to the fore. The following Table 16 (p. 231), offers an analysis of participants' perceived influences (influences validated in stories) and unperceived influences (the effects of influences described in participant stories, noted in wider literature but not perceived as an influence).

TABLE 16 PERCEIVED AND UNPERCEIVED INFLUENCES

Systems	Perceived	Unperceived
Time system	*Long running influences that had included marriage, time out of paid work to raise children, divorce, remarriage, decisions about training, decisions about careers, financial decisions about investing in occupational pension schemes, investing in houses and various health issues. (Bimrose, 2015, Loretto and Vickerstaff, 2012)	
Environment and social system	<p>Policy systems</p> <p>*Older women had perceived a rise in their state pension age</p> <p>*Revolving door contractors had perceived IR35</p> <p>Organisational systems</p> <p>*Public sector organisations</p> <p>*Internet and various online systems</p> <p>*Family had been perceived but not as an organisational system despite operating as property company</p> <p>Financial systems</p> <p>*Umbrella companies and accountants</p> <p>*Husbands income</p> <p>*Regional differences in property prices</p> <p>Social systems</p> <p>*Husbands job including level of job security, types of contract and retirement decisions, older children's needs, caring for older relatives and caring for grandchildren</p>	<p>Policy systems</p> <p>*Younger women had not perceived the rise in their state pension age</p> <p>*Policy delivering cuts and demanding savings from public sector organisations</p> <p>*Differentiated tax, national insurance and legal treatments for different employment status and the savings made by their public sector organisations</p> <p>*Agency regulations</p> <p>*Equalities Act protections</p> <p>*Entitlement to impartial careers guidance</p> <p>Organisational systems</p> <p>*Family as an organisation despite its capacity to develop into a market company as well as its demand for unpaid work</p> <p>Financial systems</p> <p>*Participants had not perceived the savings made by their public sector organisations as a result of adopting casualised work force models</p> <p>*Participants had not perceived their domestic and care work as work</p> <p>*Participants had not perceived unpaid transition work and market work as work</p>
Intermediary systems	<p>Types of Intermediary System</p> <p>*Social</p> <p>*Market and social</p> <p>*Market and public sector</p> <p>*Social and public sector</p> <p>*Charity and public sector</p> <p>*Traditional careers and education systems</p>	<p>Participants had perceived the influence of intermediary systems but had not been able to name them.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">contd.</p>

Work system	Paid work Public sector agency contracting, public and private sector permanent casual contracts, permanent contracts that proved to be temporary, traditional breadwinner types and self-employment	Unpaid work *Unpaid domestic and care work *Unpaid transition work (volunteering, seeking and applying for jobs, network etc.) and *Unpaid market work (contracting administration, CPD, accounts, unpaid travel and so on)
Individual system		Norms, identities, beliefs and coping narratives, values, geographical anchors, emotions and varying levels of resilience

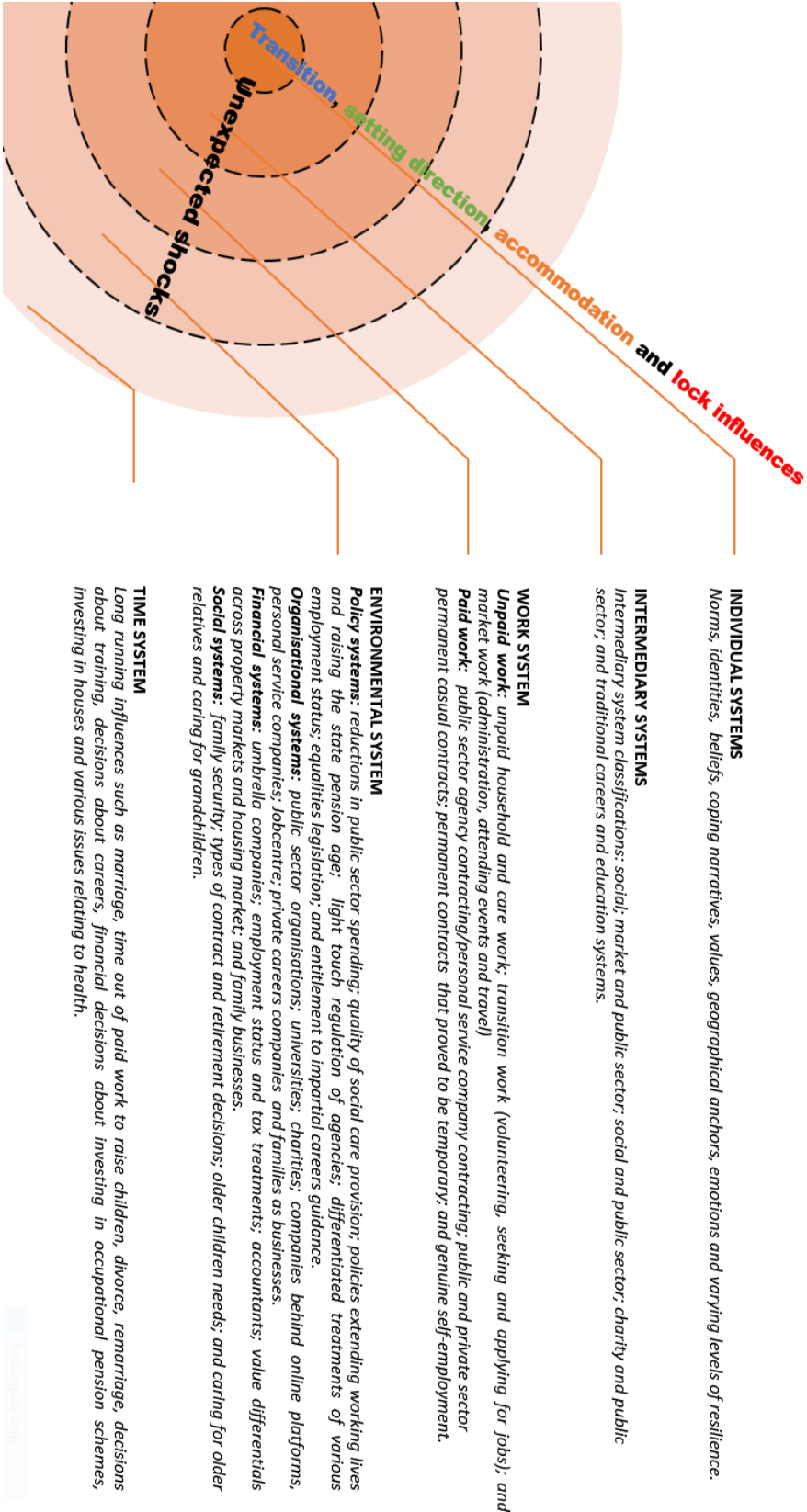
Unperceived influences tended to reside in the environment sub-systems of policy, organisation, finance, work and individual system. In the policy system, younger participants did not perceive the influence of the rising state pension age. None of the participants perceived the influence of Government demands for public sector organisations to make cuts and savings (HM Treasury 2010; Institute for Fiscal Studies, 2015), perceptions tending to only extend as far as organisations. Participants were also unaware of the different legal and tax treatments of different employment status and the financial consequences of adopting different employment status – for either them or their public sector organisations (Adam, Miller and Pope, 2017; Cribb, 2014; Coulter, 2016; Taylor et al., 2017). Neither did they perceive any regulation of agencies (see Appendix 4, p.275), policies protecting them from discrimination, or their right to access free impartial advice and guidance (Bowes et al. 2013; DBIS, 2012). Within the organisational system, participants did not perceive family as an economic organisation (Rubery, 2014). Furthermore, within the financial system, they failed to perceive the savings made by public sector organisations, in adopting more casual workforce models, as their own financial contributions to those organisational savings; for example, by paying for their own training and professional development, holidays, administration costs associated with payment structures and so on (see Appendix 3, p.273). With regard to intermediary systems, then understanding how intermediaries had been operating as intermediary systems, and the influences of these intermediary systems, tended

to be more emergent. More importantly, none of the participants had perceived unpaid work as work (Bimrose et al., 2015; Cohen, 2014; Hochschild, 1989; Lyonette, 2015; Oakley 2013, Richardson and Schaeffer, 2013).

To sum up, it was apparent that the original STF was unable to represent the influence of intermediary systems on transitions arising from austerity driven changes to public sector organisations. As a consequence of extending the STF, it has been possible to include all work undertaken by participants, intermediary system influence and influences embedded in the wider environment sub-systems of policy, organisations finance and social influences and the individual system, solving this problem.

The extended STF, presented next as Figure 38 (p.234), acts as a visual representation of findings from the research, along with supporting an understanding of its interpretive and substantive theory. The figure represents perceived and unperceived influences operating in individual, intermediary, work, environment and time systems of all participants, at the time of the research

FIGURE 38 EXTENDED SYSTEM THEORY FRAMEWORK MAP SUPPORTING THE RESEARCH'S SUBSTANTIVE THEORY (AS DEPICTED IN PREVIOUS CHAPTERS)



Source: Extended System Theory Framework (original version produced by Patton and McMahon 2006, 2014)

Drawing on Figure 38, the following interpretive and substantive theory explains how the research participant's transitions were influenced by intermediaries.

Firstly, participants perceived intermediaries as social intermediary systems: market and public sector intermediary systems; market and social intermediary systems; social and public sector intermediary systems; charity and public sector intermediary systems; traditional careers and education intermediary systems.

Secondly, these intermediary systems were involved in six patterns of transition, these included the following: public sector revolving door transitions with changing employment status; reluctant employees making subjective transitions; geographical relocations; transitions from simple to complex work; transitions into economic inactivity and care; and being held in transition.

Thirdly, analysis of the intermediary systems involved in these patterns of transition revealed how participants needed to make accommodations to sustain transitions, suggesting intermediary systems were also involved in these accommodations too. Furthermore, the analysis revealed how intermediary systems benefitted from participants engaging in particular transition patterns.

Fourthly, research participants tended to not perceive wider contextual policy influences and individual system influences (see Table 16, p.231) outlining perceived and unperceived influences shaping transition above). The combined extended STF and Table of perceived and unperceived influences reveal a number of unperceived influences, illustrated by participants undergoing revolving door transitions, illustrated below:

- *Unperceived:* Government austerity policies had driven public sector organisations to make savings, even those organisations supplying compliance checked services. *[Environment (policy) requires public sector organisations Environment (organisation) to make savings whilst still providing the same statutory services]*
- *Unperceived:* Differentiated tax, national insurance and legal treatments for different employment status had constructed incentives for organisations to adopting casual workforce models to make savings *[Environment (policy and finance) set the direction of Environment (organisations) to adopt casual work force models]*
- *Unperceived:* Public sector organisations had adopted casual workforce models and, for professional staff, intermediaries were needed to ensure staff were compliance checked, held and then supplied, as and when required, for as long as required. *[Environment (policy, finance) set direction for organisations to engage with intermediary system (Type 2 market and public sector) for compliance checked casual professionals. Intermediary system (Type 2 market and public sector) benefit from locking in compliance checked professionals]*
- *Unperceived:* Professional occupational identities, geographical anchors, and fatigue associated with job seeking set direction towards seeking help from family, friends and co-worker contractors that set direction towards market and public sector intermediary systems. *[Individual system sets direction towards Intermediary system (Type 3 (a) market and social intermediary system) who set direction towards Intermediary system (Type 2 market and public sector system)].*
- *Unperceived:* Public sector organisations had only recruited from their preferred market and public sector intermediary system, requiring public sector professionals to engage and change their employment status. *[Environment system (policy, finance and organisation) set direction towards*

Intermediary system (Type 3 (a) social intermediary system) that set direction towards Intermediary system (Type 2 market and public sector intermediary system) that locks in worker and locks in their change of employment status]

Fifthly, and finally, participants did not perceive unpaid transition work, unpaid market work and unpaid domestic and care work as work. Consequently, they unquestioningly accepted increased levels of unpaid transition and market work, required to deliver casual contracts through various intermediary systems.

This section has drawn on research findings to present new meanings of taken for granted concepts outlined in the research designs original research question. It has also extended the original STF to support an interpretive and substantive theory explaining how influences, including intermediary system influences, were able to influence participants' patterns of transition. Finally, the section has drawn on an extended STF theory to answer the research question posed by the thesis.

7.4 CHAPTER CONCLUSIONS

Returning to the research question: *How do a group of UK older women (aged 50 to rising state pension age) perceive the influence of intermediaries on their work transition(s) during austerity?* To conclude, the chapter has answered the original thesis research question and, in so doing, made three new contributions to knowledge. Firstly, a theoretical contribution in the form of the research's new interpretive and substantive theory, supported by its extended STF. In addition to presenting findings about the nature of work, the second contribution to knowledge is the concept of intermediary reconceptualised as a new concept of intermediary system with transition, setting direction and lock influence on transitions. Participants' patterns of transition are also represented, however, only knowledge

of how revolving door transitions resulted in changes in employment status is claimed as new knowledge, making it the research's third contribution to knowledge.

CHAPTER EIGHT: THESIS CONCLUSIONS

Looking back on the research journey, participants' voices were privileged in the construction of knowledge about how intermediaries came to shape their transition(s). The outstanding tasks of the thesis are to confirm its new contributions to knowledge, share the problems encountered along the way and their effects on the research findings, ensure the original thesis research problem has been addressed, and, finally, consider the overall value of the thesis in addressing the gap in knowledge about intermediaries. Each of these tasks are fulfilled in their relevant sections below, starting with confirmation of the new findings.

8.1 RESEARCH CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE

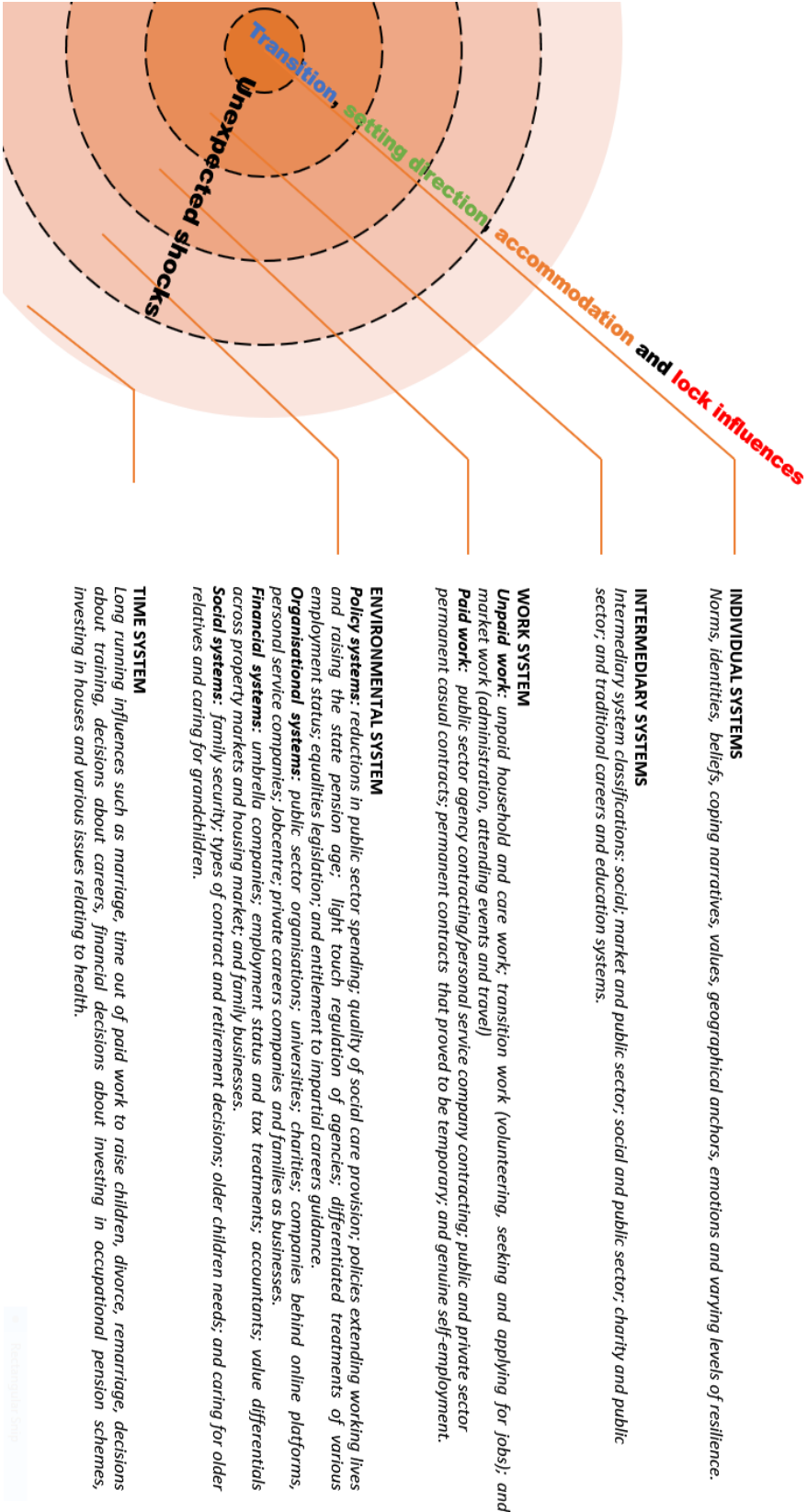
The research has made three original contributions to knowledge. Firstly, a theoretical contribution in the form of a new interpretive and substantive theory, supported by an extended STF. Secondly, a reconceptualisation of the concept of intermediary as an intermediary system with transition, setting direction and lock influences. Thirdly, amongst several patterns of transition, a new revolving door transition with a change in employment status. The following subsections take each of these findings in turn to address the following question: *what difference do these findings make?*

8.1.1 An extended System Theory Framework and theory

Reviewing the experiences of the women in this study, it was apparent the original STF had been unable to represent their experiences of work, transition in work, the reconceptualisation of intermediary systems and the new pattern of transition. It was evident, therefore, that the original STF needed to be extended to incorporate an intermediary and work system whilst transition, setting direction, accommodation

and lock (in and out) influences were added to its recursions. These adaptations have resulted in a visual representation of all the influences shaping participants' transitions and supports a new interpretive and substantive theory on the topic of intermediary system influence, supported by Figure 39 (p.241), presented next.

FIGURE 39 EXTENDED SYSTEM THEORY FRAMEWORK (AS PRESENTED IN PREVIOUS CHAPTERS)



Source: Extended System Theory Framework (original version produced by Patton and McMahon 2006, 2014)

The contribution of this new extended STF theory ensures all forms of work (unpaid transition work, unpaid and paid market work, and unpaid domestic and care work) are made visible. Furthermore, that new intermediary system influences on transition(s) in work are also made visible in conjunction with the transition, setting direction, accommodation and lock (in and out) effects of contextual influences. Future research designs based on the new extended STF, therefore, could adopt a more complex and inclusive approach to understanding the nature of transition in complex work. They will also be cognisant of the involvement of intermediary systems in transitions in work, as well as appreciating how wider contextual influences play their part.

8.1.2 Intermediary Systems

The literature, presented in Chapter Two, identified intermediaries as single bounded entities. These included careers shapers (Bosley et al, 2009), important others (Cohen, 2014), distributors, evaluators, matchmakers, consultants (Bessy and Chauvin, 2013), temporary staffing agencies, executive search firms, gang masters (Enright 2013), careers advisers (Hughes, 2013; Patton and McMahon, 2006, 2014; Savickas, 2008) and the Government's Jobcentre and National Careers Service (Bowes et al. 2013; Daguerre, 2009; Hughes, 2013; House of Commons Work and Pensions Committee, 2014). A more abstract version also emerged from policy literature as employment status, subject to different policy, legal and tax treatments (Adam, Miller, and Pope, 2017). Based on the evidence provided in this research, however, they are defined more clearly as follows:

Definition of an intermediary system: An intermediary system consists of a combination of informal and formal interactions, intersections, conversions and convergences of people, organisations and online platforms that mutually benefit from particular transition(s) in paid and unpaid work. An intermediary system

operates in a wider context of influences and, similar to these wider contextual influences, has transition, setting direction, accommodation, lock (in or out) influence on transitions into paid and or unpaid work. In some cases, an intermediary system's influence can be mitigated by unique configurations of personal circumstances; for example, where there are sufficient funds to provide choice about whether to accept or reject various types of work.

Overall, the thesis has presented twenty-three intermediary systems, classifying them into six types of system: social, market and public sector, market and social, social and public sector, charity and public sector and traditional careers and education intermediary systems.

Reasons for why previous studies had not identified intermediaries as intermediary systems may have been due to their choice of research methods, or because intermediary systems had not existed at the time. For example, survey method questions may have deployed questions assuming intermediaries to be single entities, receiving no responses to the contrary (see Bessy and Chauvin, 2013; Enright, 2013); a one off interview would not have provided sufficient time to reveal them as system influences (Bosley, et al., 2009). Furthermore, at the time of these studies public sector organisations may not have started to develop either casual work force models or intermediary systems necessary to deploy them. In contrast, by the time my study was underway, public sector organisations would have been implementing their responses to Government demands for cuts and savings, revealing them as intermediary systems. It is hoped the contribution of discovering intermediaries as intermediary systems may instigate further research into their nature and the extent of them. For example, a more in-depth investigation into the nature of market and public sector intermediary systems might include understanding them from the perspective of agency managers, employment consultants, public sector managers, umbrella company managers, accountants and other personnel from within such a system. Such research might also include delving

into the background of the system to find out more about other associated market entities, such as who owns them, where they are registered and the countries they operate from. Survey based research may also establish the extent of them and their influence across both the public sector and wider sectors.

8.1.3 Revolving door transitions with changes in employment status

Previous literature investigated transitions as job seeking behaviours and employment outcomes (Blustein et al., 2013; Solve et al., 2014; Lin Chen et al., 2016; Klehe et al., 2011; Vantseenkiste et al., 2013); life course transitions (Bimrose et al., 2015; Savickas, et al., 2009); fuzzy transitions into retirement (Duberly and Carmicheal, 2016); lifelong learning and transition (Brown et al., 2012); subjective transitions (Bimrose et al., 2015; Blustein et al., 2013; Gabriel et al., 2013; Simosi, et al., 2015); and transition as family risk and securities (Rubery and Rafferty, 2014; Schmid, 2015). Whilst the literature referenced a number of austerity driven public sector transitions, there were no references made to public sector revolving door transition(s) involving changes in employment status. In addressing this gap, my study revealed how participants came to exit their public sector employee jobs, engage with various market and public sector intermediary systems and change their employment status again, to avoid umbrella companies.

8.2 REFLECTIONS ON THE RESEARCH




This section completes Charmaz's outstanding evaluation prompts that were dependent on reflecting on the research journey from the finishing line. Then the section reflects on problems experienced in the research, how they were addressed and with what effect.

Returning to Chapter Three's evaluation of Grounded Theory, two of Charmaz's prompts had been left outstanding. The first asked if there was sufficient evidence to support the reader with forming an independent assessment of the research's claims? The evidence in this research includes excerpts from interview transcripts and interview stories; shorter analytical stories listed in Appendix 9 (pp.280-320); and intermediary systems and patterns of transition - all cross referenced with intermediary system(s), participants' accommodations and benefits gained by intermediary systems listed in Chapter Seven. To this extent, sufficient evidence is provided to support the reader with assessing the thesis claims. Charmaz's second prompt asked if overall analysis offered sufficient insights into participants' lives and worlds? By foregrounding participants' voices in the construction of interview stories about influences shaping transitions, and by embedding data within shorter analytical stories, the research retains these insights. The section now moves on to reflect on problems experienced along the research journey, how they were, or could have been addressed and to what effect.

The first problem had been the challenge of recruiting participants to the study. Initially I had relied on public sector managers and Trade Union officials, with no success for several months. Only later did I come to realise these people were experiencing chronic job insecurity themselves or may well have been involved in making people redundant, therefore, unlikely to have helped me. Once I switched to advertising for participants in the local newspaper and in a private careers company, participants had come forward and referred me on to their friends in the same position: a snowball effect.

At the same time, initial conversations with participants had revealed that my research proposal's sampling strategy was also misguided. The following Table 17 (p.246), supporting a non-probability sampling structure, was presented in the original research proposal.

TABLE 17 RESEARCH PROPOSAL'S NON-PROBABILITY SAMPLING**Table 1. Non-probability Research Sample**

Participants	Phase 1: Currently exiting	Phase 2: Actively seeking	Phase 3: Recently made a work-state change
Group 1: 8 Participants			
Group 2: 8 Participants			
Group 3: 4 Participants			

However, from the start, participants' stories demonstrated the impossibility of placing them in the table's phase categories. For example, those in complex work were describing experiences of all three categories across multiple contracts, sometimes simultaneously happening at the same time. However, given the study was taking an inductive exploratory approach to researching intermediary systems, and given concerns about finding participants, I accepted all cases either exiting or recently exited public sector organisations. On the one hand, given the research was in a new area of research being inductively explored then all findings had value. On the other hand, the adverse effect of taking this approach had been to limit the diversity of the group and the potential of finding out about how influences were shaping the transitions of more diverse cases. Future research may address the problem by undertaking research with a more more diverse group of participants across age, ethnicity, gender, disability and possible intersections ³⁶ of these protected characteristics.

³⁶ Intersectional discrimination acknowledges how intertwining forms of age, sex class and race discrimination are not addressed by the single protected characteristics of the Equalities Act (Moore, 2009)

The second problem had been more of a missed opportunity. Only later in the research did I realise that participants' husband's jobs were also at the forefront of public sector organisational change, and they had been engaging with intermediary systems too (see Ruth, Jane and Sarah's stories). The original research proposal would have done well to heed Lorretto and Vickerstaff's (2012) suggestion that researchers should be open to a couples approach to interviews. The effect was to miss the opportunity of understanding the influence of intermediary systems from a couple's and male perspective.

The third problem had been the time required to transcribe an interview, analyse the transcript, turn it into an interview story and return it to the participant before their next interview. More importantly, the challenge of doing the same for twenty participants who remained with the research. As a consequence, interview contacts were limited to three face-to-face interviews, to ensure sufficient time for all twenty participants' experiences of transition to be storied within the research's time frame. The research may also have benefitted from fewer participants being interviewed more frequently, and over a longer period of time, gaining deeper insights into intermediary systems. As it was, by retaining twenty participants the research benefitted from identifying a broader range of intermediary systems. In the future, a more in-depth understanding of intermediary systems, such as market and public sector intermediary systems, may be derived from research taking the perspective of different operators within the system. For example, agency managers, employment consultants, public sector managers, umbrella company managers and other personnel from within a system. Such research might also include delving into the background of the system to find out more about the market entity, for example, ownership, registration and the countries in which the market entity might operate.

The fourth problem has already been referenced in Chapter Three section 3.4, primarily the ontological limits of the extended STF theory. Although, whilst the

theory is both interpretive and substantive, it continues to hold value. As Hammond (2018) and Swedberg (2012) advise, I have presented a full personal account of how I arrived at my extended STF, based on participants' validations up to and including analysis of their interviews into interview stories. Furthermore, the extended STF still has the power to explain how intermediary systems influenced patterns of transition in work experienced by research participants and, furthermore, makes a contribution to the social research discourse community about intermediaries. In the future, survey-based research can establish the extent of intermediary systems on transitions in work for wider populations and across wider sectors. The chapter now moves on to consider the implications of thesis findings for policy.

8.3 THE IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

The research findings have implications for several of the policy areas outlined at the beginning of the thesis. To start, Government intended to reduce public sector spending (HM Treasury, 2010; Institute for Fiscal Studies, 2015; Coulter, 2016); extend working lives (DWP, 2014a and 2014b; Phillipson et al., 2016); take a "light touch" approach to regulating agencies (Finn, 2016, p.92); and Government funded advice and guidance services were being delivered through the Jobcentre and National Careers Service (Daguerre and Etherington, 2009; Hughes, 2013; Bowes, et al., 2013). The implications of the research findings for each of these policy areas are considered in turn, starting with public sector organisations being required to make savings.

Findings from the research would suggest public sector organisations were adopting similar strategies to managing reducing budgets: namely, retaining essential employees (reluctant employees undergoing subjective transitions) whilst subjecting remaining employees to repeated rounds of restructurings, resulting in

compulsory and voluntary redundancies and resignations. At the same time, participants provided evidence of organisations drawing on intermediary systems to support various casual work force models, as presented in stories of revolving door and simple to complex transitions.

In the short-term, reducing employee headcount, whilst replacing them with casual contractors, would have resulted in a reduction in staffing costs and savings in sick pay, holiday pay, national insurance contributions, pension contributions and training costs (see Appendix 3, p.273). In the longer-term, however, these strategies may pose a range of risks for these organisations. For example, deployment of intermediary systems to recruit staff runs the risk of limiting staff diversity, compromising existing staff's moral - as opportunities for advancement are closed down, circumventing candidate assessments leading to reducing skills levels and the compromise of conventional organisational recruitment policies and their adherence to the Equalities Act. The strategy also runs the risk of compromising the quality of services; Eleanor and Ruth had both described being required to deliver contracts outside their areas of professional expertise. A further risk of casualisation lies in its potential to develop a momentum of its own, unable to be halted. Evidence of this momentum was presented in Ruth, Eleanor, Dawn and Harriet's stories of the many influences setting them in the direction of contracting; for example, family members working as contractors recommending they move into contracting and contractors working alongside them role modelling less stressful ways of working (market and social intermediary systems and social and public sector intermediary systems). The implication of market and public sector intermediary systems locking in contractors also poses the risk of the market entity controlling the supply of casual contractors and, therefore, their value (also noted by Bessy and Chauvin, 2013), potentially leading to longer-term rises in staffing costs.

Moving on to policy areas involved in extending working lives (DWP, 2014; Phillipson et al., 2016), the implications of findings from this research would suggest that unless Government takes heed of the complexity of both work and intermediary systems, then carers in contracting work may find themselves experiencing increasing levels of stress and fatigue (see Samantha, Harriet, Jane, Jenny and Beth's stories) or transitioning into economic inactivity and care (see Jane and Jenny stories). For example, Samantha transitioned into complex work that combined several agency contracts (paid work); caring for her grandchild - enabling her daughter to work (unpaid care work); cooking and cleaning for both her and her adult son (unpaid domestic work); and engaging in ongoing searches for her next contract (unpaid transition work). In her final interview, she disclosed the extent of her exhaustion and had been to visit the GP to find ways of coping. Equally, Jenny, a limited company contracting through a market and public sector intermediary system, had been living away from home delivering her contract. She had been increasingly concerned for the wellbeing of her elderly relatives, given the poor quality of the local care provision. She had hoped her preferred market and public sector intermediary system would furnish her with a local part time contract, to enable her to offer more care. Unfortunately, her stories were about falling through her preferred market and public sector intermediary system, in pursuit of a local contract and then being discounted by a further market and public sector intermediary system only interviewing full time contractors first.

Moving on to agency regulation, Finn (2017, p.72) had described the UK's regulatory approach to agencies as "light touch". Agencies were supposed to be following their own Recruitment and Employment Confederations Code of Practice (2003), outlined in Appendix 4 (p.275). However, evidence from this research suggested otherwise; for example, the code protected contractors' rights to work elsewhere, as noted in Appendix 4, however, Ruth and her Head Teacher were put off with the threat of agency introduction fees. Furthermore, Ruth believed she

would never work as an employee again, because she had worked as a contractor across all her local schools and had no plans to move out of the area.

The Code of Practice (2003) also required respect for contractors' professional knowledge, yet Ruth and Eleanor's intermediary systems required them to deliver contracts outside their areas of professional expertise, despite their professional concerns. The agency's veiled threats, of not being offered future contracts, ensured their compliance with the same threat being used to require both to work more hours than they had wanted.

A further finding of the research was that agencies were part of complex intermediary systems, as noted in the thesis definition of intermediary systems. The extended STF also draws attention to the contextual conditions shaping the influence of intermediary systems. For example, the agencies Code of Practice (2003) required agencies to respect the right of contractors to prompt and accurate payment, outlined in Appendix 4 (also noted in environment policy system: minimum agency regulations). However, Ruth and Eleanor's intermediary systems were able to outsource responsibility for payment systems to an umbrella companies (environment finance system). Both participants, however, found their umbrella company payment systems unreliable, resulting in Eleanor absorbing the costs of converting to a limited company to avoid them (environment policy and finance system). In this respect, Government would benefit from identifying agencies as intermediary systems and reviewing how its wider policy and finance systems are creating perverse incentives for agency contractors to become limited companies, clearly disadvantaging them.

Finally, the research findings revealed how most participants found it difficult to imagine working outside professional identities, and how job seeking was emotionally exhausting (see Dawn and Harriet's stories). Ideally, more traditional

careers and education intermediary systems would have supported participants with rethinking identities in the context of new career opportunities created in sectors receiving Government funds (Heseltine, 2012; HM Treasury, 2013), and would have reduced job search fatigue. Unfortunately, participants' stories of engaging with these types of systems tended to be quite negative; for example, Sally's experience of an NHS, charity and Jobcentre intermediary system (Type 6 (d)) had led her to distrust the charity after witnessing a breach of personal sensitive data; Kate and Harriet had felt pressured by the Jobcentre to accept jobs beneath their skills level (Type 6 (b)); and Rebecca and Kaz had both been surprised by the low quality of the Jobcentre's commissioned courses (Type 6 (c)). More importantly, none of the participants had known about the National Careers Service's offer, confirming Bowes and colleagues (2013) findings that the service was being rationed by remaining invisible. The implications of these findings were that Government funded advice and guidance services was failing to support workers with extending their working life or with transitions into sectors in receipt of Government funding through its industrial strategy (Heseltine, 2012; HM Treasury, 2013).

To sum up, the research findings have implications for both Government and organisational policy, however, further survey-based research needs to determine the extent of the implications.

8.4 RETURNING TO THE ORIGINAL PROBLEM OUTLINED IN CHAPTER ONE

At the start of the thesis, the research problem was presented as a gap in knowledge about new online platform intermediaries and three unresolved issues arising from policy literature. The first issue was how older women were experiencing being

forced into economic inactivity (Phillipson, Vickerstaff and Lain, 2016; DWP, 2014, p.9). The second issue was the observation of growing numbers of self-employed workers joining the education sector, with no explanation for why (Coulter, 2016, p.204). The third was that National Health Service and education sectors were experiencing unprecedented levels of outsourcing with elements of public service work being delivered through “private sector agencies” (Cribb et al., 2014, p.22), but with no information about how this was happening.

Findings from this research offer insights into all of these issues. Firstly, participants paid little or no attention to Linked In, CV Library and Universal Job Match platforms. For example, Clare rejected LinkedIn because she had wanted a “local” job and Samantha distrusted and rejected them because they required her personal data. Instead, the research revealed a range of intermediary systems, some of which were reliant on internet platforms. For example, Sarah and Kaz’s families relied on internet property platforms and job seeking platforms to support both their relocations (see Type 1 (b) and Type 3 (b)).

Moving on to the first of the unresolved policy issues, Chapter Six presented insights into how research participants experienced transitions into economic inactivity and care. Of note were the incompatibility of providing care at home whilst meeting the increasing demands, and tighter work deadlines, of public sector work (see the stories of Harriet, Beth, Joanne, Kate, Jane and Jenny). Jenny’s story had been different, she was a public sector contractor and, at her level, was expected to temporarily relocate (with the help of the online platform Spareroom.com) and work full time hours. Her story had evidenced the incompatibility of contracting through market and public sector intermediaries whilst providing increasing levels of care at home, particularly in the context of concerns about the quality of care services provided by a local council.

A further unresolved policy issue had been how self-employed numbers across education and health sectors were rising (Coulter, 2016; Cribb et al., 2014). Chapter Four provided insights into how participants exited public sector employee contracts only to return via market and public sector intermediary systems as agency contractors (public sector revolving door transitions with changes in employment status). Later, in an effort to avoid umbrella companies, these participants had become self-employed limited companies whilst continuing to contract through intermediary systems. Stories of revolving door transitions explain the rising numbers of self employed in the education sector. Closely linked to this unresolved policy issue was how elements of public service work were being delivered through “private sector agencies” (Cribb et al., 2014, p.22). This research identified private sector agencies as various market and public sector intermediary systems, revealed in Tables 14, (p.218) and Table 15 (p.22) presented in Chapter Seven, along with the thesis theory explaining how these intermediary systems were involved. Now, moving on to a summary of the value of the thesis presented next.

8.5 THE VALUE OF THE THESIS IN ADDRESSING THE GAP IN KNOWLEDGE ABOUT INTERMEDIARIES

The thesis presents rich data, from personal experiences of transition, arising from public sector responses to Government’s austerity driven demands for change. Drawing on the original STF to support analysis of the data, and subsequent theorising, the thesis has presented an interpretive and substantive theory to explain how influences, including those of intermediary systems, were able to shape the personal experiences of transition. The theory also reveals both the complexity of work and intermediaries as intermediary systems supported by wider contextual influences, some of which were perceived and unperceived by participants. The value of its resulting theory, and particularly the extended STF or Figure 38 (p.234) supporting the theory, are listed below:

- it renders all forms of work visible making it a more inclusive theory;

- it reveals intermediary systems involved in work, particularly complex market and public sector intermediary systems involved in flexible/contracting work; and
- the extended STF figure (Figure 38, p.234) supports an explanation of how influences across systems were able to shape research participants' transitions in work during a period of England's austerity. Furthermore, simplifies the complexity of how influences shape transition(s).

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Table establishing a gap in knowledge

Studies touching on the gap in literature about the influence of intermediaries

Studies	1. Does this study answer the thesis question?	2. Is the study conducted between 2010-16?	3. Applies Grounded Theory to create a substantive theory?	4. Is data collected during participants transition?	5. More than one interview?	6. Validated storying applied?
Bimrose et al (2015)	No references are made to intermediaries	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Cohen and Duberly (2015)	No references are made to intermediaries	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Cohen (2014)	No because participants are not in transition.	Yes	Yes	No	Yes but 12 years apart	No

Appendix 2: Table showing changes in employment share by sector

Employment sector (2007 SIC)	Change in employment 2008Q1 to 2014Q3, %	Share of employment 2008Q1, %	Weekly earnings as percentage of average (£443), 2008Q1
Public administration and defence	-12	5	121
Manufacturing	-10	9	114
Construction	-8	7	117
Wholesale, retail; repair of cars and motor vehicles	-4	16	87
Financial, insurance and real estate	-5	4	157
Transport and storage	6	5	105
Administrative and support services	7	8	104
Information and communication	9	5	157
Other services	9	2	90
Accommodation and food service	10	6	68
Education	11	8	118
Human health and social work	15	11	106
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	20	1	79
Professional, scientific and technical	25	7	157

Source: Analysis of Labour Force Survey Data (Coulter (2016), p. 213)

Appendix 3: Legal forms and associated policy treatments

Legal Forms:	Description Source: Adam, Miller and Pope (2017, pp. 6-8)	Tax and NIC treatments
Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * An employment contract is in place dictating agreed employment activities. * Payment is through a company payroll. * Legal rights (sometimes only after a minimum employment period) include minimum wage, statutory minimum holiday, sickness and redundancy pay, protection against unlawful discrimination and unfair dismissal, and statutory maternity/paternity/adoption and shared leave. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Liable to Class 1 National Insurance Contributions (NIC) (Primary Contributions) and their employers are required to pay Class 1A and 1B NIC's (Secondary Contributions). * Statutory sick pay * Statutory maternity, paternity, adoption and shared leave. * Minimum notice period if employment will be ending. * Protection against unfair dismissal * Right to request flexible working * Time off for emergencies * Statutory redundancy pay * Can join pension scheme * Entitled to an employment contract
Worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Employment law sets out a broader 'worker' status – all employees are workers but not all workers are employees. * Individuals engaged in casual or irregular work (e.g. zero-hour contracts) likely to be classified as workers but not employees. * Recent court ruling stated Uber drivers should be considered as workers rather than self-employed. 	<p>Entitled to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * National minimum wage * May also be entitled to statutory sick pay, maternity pay, paternity pay, adoption pay, shared parental pay. <p>Not entitled to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Minimum notice period * Protection against unfair dismissal * Right to request flexible working * Time off for emergencies * Statutory Redundancy pay
Self-employed Sole Traders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Self-employed (also known as sole traders) work for themselves, running their own unincorporated business and bearing full personal responsibility for any debt or loss. * Can hold business assets and employ others but the business has no separate legal personality. * When interacting with others, for example as a contractor, they are protected by health and safety law, in some cases discrimination, but not covered by employment law. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * They pay lower NIC than employees and their employers pay no contributions. * Those recruiting the self-employed avoid legal obligations that come with an employment contract such as national minimum wage, statutory sick pay, holiday pay, fair dismissal and immigration checks.
Company Incorporated businesses including Personal Service Companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Limited liability companies are legal entities capable of enjoying rights and being subject to duties distinct from those borne by shareholders, even if only one shareholder. * Shareholders are owners of shares and not the underlying business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Lower NICs and their employers make no contributions. * Can pay themselves in (more lightly taxed) dividends, and, possibly capital gains rather than just wages. * More opportunities to avoid or evade tax. * Employers recruiting the self-employed avoid legal obligations that come with an

	assets. Limited liability relates to the shareholder. The company is liable to the full extent of its assets.	employment contract such as national minimum wage, statutory sick pay, holiday pay, fair dismissal and immigration check and employer NICs. *Companies with a turnover below £83,000 are exempt from VAT
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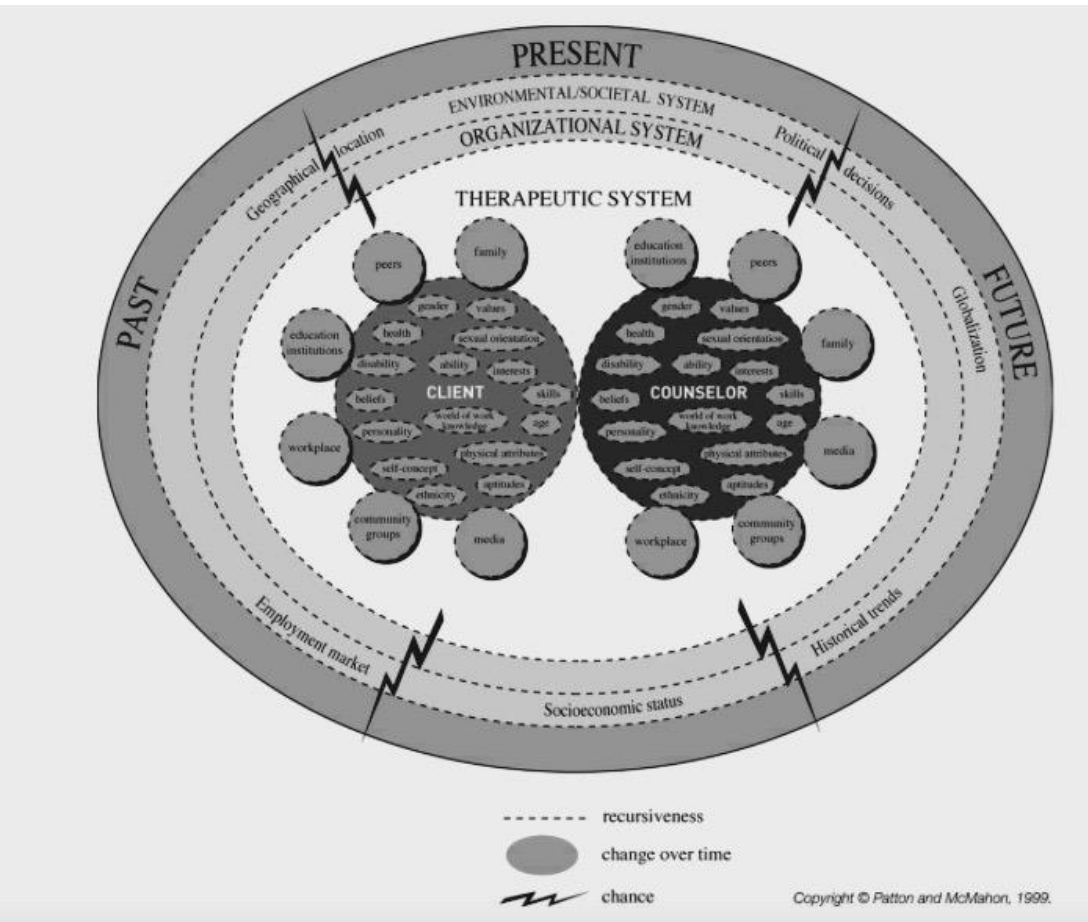
Source: Adam, Miller and Pope (2017, pp 6-8)

Appendix 4: Regulations controlling agencies

Enforcement Body	Regulation	Action
The Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate (EASI)	Responsible for ensuring compliance with: Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses Regulations (2003)	Designed to ensure agency workers are treated fairly by their agencies. It is possible to opt out of these arrangements when becoming self-employed.
Employment Tribunals *Fees are charged for bringing claims	*European agency workers directive 2008 came into force as Agency Worker Regulations 2010 implemented in 2011	Offers rights after day one and then further rights after 12 weeks: Day one: user company has liability for ensuring day one rights for agency workers which comprise of same access to staff canteen, child care and internal vacancies etc. Twelve weeks: agency workers are entitled to the same conditions of employment as if directly employed by the hirer. Covers pay, bonus commission, holiday pay, annual leave but does not include redundancy pay or contractual sick pay.
HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)	Provides enforcement function for statutory sick pay redeemable by employers through PAYE.	
Statutory role of Director of Labour Market Enforcement created in 2016	Expected to formulate a strategy to set the direction of EASI, HMRC, and National minimum and National Living Wage teams with regard to employment practices.	
Recruitment and Employment Confederations (REC) Code of Practice (2003) <i>Since 2012, member agencies were expected to conduct a bi-annual compliance test. REC could apply spot checks, investigate cases and refer cases to the EASI</i>	A self-regulating code of conduct that consists of ten principles further broken down into expectations of best practice. 1. Respect for laws 2. Respect for honesty and transparency 3. Respect for work relationships 4. Respect for diversity 5. Respect for safety 6. Respect for professional knowledge 7. Respect for certainty of engagement 8. Respect for prompt and accurate payment 9. Respect for international recruitment 10. Respect for confidentiality and privacy Further restrictions had included the following: not advertising jobs that do not exist; not withholding payments or wages due; not preventing a temporary agency work from working elsewhere or requiring them to tell the agency the identity of any future employer (Finn, 2017)	
Note: The UK’s Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service offered advice for temporary works on issues relating to temporary work agencies. It also had a one stop online and telephone support offer and could put workers in touch with various enforcement agencies such as the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate who could take enforcement further (Finn, 2017)		

Source: Finn (2016); Taylor Review (2016)

Appendix 5: Original System Theory Framework figure



Source Patton (2006, p.5)

Appendix 6: Career Adapt-Abilities scale sub-scales – qualitative descriptors

Subscales	Career Adapt-Abilities Scale items	Qualitative descriptors
Curiosity	Exploring my surroundings Looking for opportunities to grow as a person Imagining what my future will be like Investigating options before making a choice Observing different ways of doing things	Investigative Self-reflective Future focused/orientated Explorative Observant
Control	Making decisions by myself Thinking before I act Taking responsibility for my actions Being persistent and patient Sticking up for my beliefs	Independent/autonomous Contemplative/pre-emptive Accountable/trustworthy Persistent/patient Self-principled
Confidence	Performing tasks efficiently Learning from my mistakes Being dependable – doing what I say I will do Feeling pride in a job well done Having self-confidence	Efficient/productive Self-perceptive Reliable Proud Self-confident
Concern	Planning important things before I start Thinking about what my future will be like Realizing that today's choices shape my future Expecting the future to be good Preparing for the future	Planful Forward thinking Connects present and future Optimistic/hopeful Prepared/ready
Cooperation	Becoming less self-centered Acting friendly Getting along with all kinds of people Cooperating with others on group projects Playing my part on a team	Inter-relational Collegial/friendly Interpersonally skilled Accommodating Collaborative

Source: McMahon, Watson and Bimrose (2012), p. 764

Appendix 7: Type of intermediaries and their valuation frames

Type of intermediary Characteristics of the valuation frame	Distributor	Matchmaker	Consultant	Evaluator
<i>Definition:</i> Highly distributed	Retail industries, Producers of textile	Recruitment agencies, Talent agencies	Consultants in salaries	Financial raters
Concentrated	Specific art dealers	Model agents	Consultants in winemaking	Influent wine critics
<i>Temporality:</i> Long-term	Mass-distribution	Skills logic	Salary classifications	Wine official classifications
Short-term	Textile and fashion trends	Original look	Trendy products	Short-term conventions, Internet bubble
<i>Generality:</i> Standard	Mass-distribution	Skills logic	Salary classifications	Financial market
Singular	Art dealers	Headhunters in fields	Consultant in technologies	Architecture competition

Source: Bessy and Chauvin (2013, p. 107)

Appendix 8: References to intermediaries and other influences (Excluding the more traditional Jobcentre and online National Careers Service)

Career Shapers (Bosley <i>et al.</i> , 2009) <i>*Empirical</i> <i>*Vocational Psychology</i>	Important Others (Cohen, 2014) <i>*Empirical</i> <i>*Sociology</i>	Market Intermediaries (Bessy & Chauvin, 2013) <i>*Desk based</i> <i>*Sociology, Economics, Political Science</i>	Labour Market Intermediaries –agents (Enright, 2013) <i>*Desk based</i> <i>*Labour geography</i>
Adviser Offers suggestions opinions and/or recommendations based on his or her career worldview.	Advisers and Informants A fine line between them. Both dispense information but advisers go further in offering guidance, and a stronger sense of career and or business. Advisers are more likely to be close family.	Distributors Like art dealers, they are able to shape and control valuation frames to manage distribution.	Temporary Staffing Agencies (TSA) and Contract Brokers *Outsource jobs to workers on short term or permatemp contracts with limited fringe benefits. * TSA's focus on low skilled high volumes, whereas Contract Brokers focus on high skills and low volume. <i>References the debate on intermediaries as passive or active market actors.</i>
Informant Shares knowledge of job vacancies/opportunities and occupations.	Witness Career shapers provide feedback on participant's performance at work.	Evaluators Example of headhunting agencies that price fix employment categories through segmentation and partition strategies. These contribute to determining skills supply – scarce or generic.	
Gatekeeper Facilitates or obstructs access to jobs, promotions and development opportunities. Actions are enabled by power and position in relation to social structure.	Intermediaries and Gatekeepers * Intermediaries play a backstage role. They make introductions to key people in relation to contracts and positions. * Evidence of combined intermediary and gatekeeper roles – "Opening the door and pushing them through."	Matchmakers Recruitment agencies and talent agencies: 1. bring parties together; 2. manage information flows and 3. contribute to the construction of valuation frames associated with skills and employability	Executive Search Firms and Headhunters * Supply highly skilled workers for permanent positions for the core workforce *Involved in war for talent – driving innovation and increased profitability *Define who and who is not talented and involved in setting the price for talent. *Active in shaping employment relations, changing recruitment practice and creating markets.
Intermediary Use or are believed to use influence to intervene with powerful gatekeepers on behalf of participants. Actions are enabled by their position in relation to social structure.	Role Models Influence career world view by illuminating the (im)possible. They also contribute to self-concept in relation in offering opportunity to contrasting self with other possibilities.	Consultants Contribute to the design of evaluation frameworks that define salary hierarchies, for example quality kite- marks	
Influence: Degree to which career shapers influence career self-concept and career worldview that goes on to influence career direction and opportunities.	(New) Facilitators Do not shape schema but do offer practical help.	Additional Classifications: Definition: highly distributed (retail) to concentrated (art dealer). Temporality: long term (official classifications of wine) to short term (trendy products). Generality: standardised salary classifications through to singular negotiation conducted by headhunters.	Gangmasters Example of the 23 cockle pickers in Morecombe Bay in 2005. All recruited and organised by a gangmaster who was later convicted of manslaughter. The owners of the company that traded the cockles faced no charges as indirect employers of the cocklers.
Note: Cohen goes on to explore the influence of important others on her participant move into self-employment and how those important others can also influence career imagination – see next column.	(New) Affiliations and Social Interaction Seeking out others to reinforce self-concept. Potential for rejection arises from gendered sector structure.		Results - 2 tier compensation systems - deunionisation -erosion of employer sponsored benefits -displacement of risk on to workers -lean work force systems - casualisation of the public sector
	(New) Hinderers and Bullies * Hinderers – domestic demands *Bullies - Government regulations/new managerialism		

Source: Author

Appendix 9: Participant analytical stories

a) Revolving door transitions

Ruth

Interview one

- a) Resigns from public sector employee contract as a reception teacher due to an excessive workload, continuous observations and a challenging relationship with the Head. *[Environment (workload, monitoring, Head Teacher) recurses with Individual (feelings) resulting in recursion transition - exit]*
- b) Other supply teachers recommend “good” agencies *[Individual (identity as teacher) recurses with Social Intermediaries (other supply teachers) leading to recursion direction towards teacher agency worker]*
- c) Husband is also working as a supply teacher *[Individual (identity teacher) recurses with Social Intermediary (husband) leading to recursion direction towards teacher agency worker]*
- d) She locates local agencies, using the internet, and visits their offices with her compliance documents *[Individual (identity teacher) recursion with Intermediary System (internet), recursion with Environment (compliance), recursion with Individual (preference for local), recursion with Market Intermediary (local agencies) results in recursion transition to teacher agency worker.]*
- e) Chooses to be paid through an umbrella company *[Market Intermediary System (Agency and umbrella company) recursion direction towards teacher agency worker paid through an umbrella company]*
- f) A rise in the state pension age, and the outstanding mortgage on her rental property, means she needs to carry on working *[Environment (rise in state pension age) recursion with Other (money – paying off mortgage) leads to recursion lock into teaching agency worker]*

Interview two

g) Ruth quotes three informal agency rules: it is “dodgy” to contract directly with a school because the agency may charge an introduction fee; keep the agency informed of availability at all times; and, agency work demands working flexible hours and working outside areas of expertise. *[Intermediary System (practices) leads to recursion transition and accommodation Individual (complying with and implementing agency rules)]*

h) Ruth is following the rules *[Intermediary System (agency and Head Teacher) leads to recursion accommodation Individual (Ruth works blocks of full-time hours with Year 4 when originally wanting regular part-time hours in a reception class)]*

Interview three

i) The Head Teacher will extend Ruth’s contract, but it means working more hours. *[Intermediary System (agency and Head Teacher) requiring recursion accommodation Individual (working more hours than she would prefer)]*

j) Head rejects Ruth’s request to become an employee. He argues it would be too difficult to get the Governors to agree to pay the agency introduction fee, and Ruth would have to undergo a formal interview. Ruth decides to remain an agency worker. *[Intermediary system (Head Teacher and Agency) recursion accommodation Individual (preference to work part) recursion lock Intermediary System (Head Teacher and Agency) and Individual (preference to avoid formal interview process)]*

k) Government regulations have stopped payment through umbrella companies. Agency has reduced Ruth’s pay and charged an additional sum to schools to offset costs of administering pay. *[Environment (IR35 policy) recursion with Intermediary system (school, agency, umbrella company and individual cover costs of IR35) recursion accommodation (higher agency fees and lower individual pay)]*

l) Husband corrects agency's pay calculations and holds agency to account.

[Environment (IR35 policy) recursion with Social Intermediary (husband) recursion with Intermediary system recursion lock with Other (money)]

Harriet

Interview one

a) To escape watching the distress of colleagues being made redundant, pressure from another new line manager, and stress arising from clashes in work deadlines and the unpredictable care needs of her elderly mother she accepted the offer of voluntary redundancy from her job as a Local Government Manager. *[Environment (work environment stress) recurses with Social (elderly mother's need for care) recurses with Individual (stress) resulting in exit]*

b) She is grieving for her old job and feeling overwhelmed by online job feeds. She believes being overqualified, age prejudice, and an unwillingness to travel are against her. *[Individual (grieving, lonely, worried, beliefs about being over qualified, ageism, all good jobs are full time jobs and these are incompatible with care work) recurses with Intermediary system (online search engines, unrefined RSS feeds linked to personal email inbox) leads to Individual (feeling very despondent combined with work search fatigue) recursion direction vulnerable to taking the first job offer to avoid negative feelings]*

c) Working as a volunteer and turned down an interview with them. *[Environment (meeting her Mother's care needs) recurses with Individual (norms for being responsible for Mother's care needs) recurses with Environment/Individual (good jobs are inflexible and full time) recursion direction rejects good job]*

Interview two

d) She is managing her job feeds more efficiently: unsubscribed to some email and refined others to part time and local. She has also posted her CV on sites of interest. *[Individual (time spent on online job sites) recursion with Intermediary System (different online job sites, refining search criteria, uploading CV's) recursion accommodation (managing intermediary system, RSS feeds, job search fatigue, and mental health)]*

e) Sister draws attention to the new internal council agency called Temp Solutions and she has applied. She starts tomorrow on a zero-hour contract for minimum wage. She doesn't know what she will be doing and is concerned she will be bored but at least she is back with old work colleagues. *[Social intermediary (Sister works for the Council and forwards an email about the new Council agency to Harriet) recurses with Intermediary System [Council sets up new agency to service its recruitment needs and advertises through current council employees) lead to recursion transition to agency worker.]*

Interview three

f) Working two and a half day a week for the Council agency and feeling less despondent. No longer checking her online job site feeds and continues to volunteer at the Princes Trust to buffer future uncertainties. *[Individual (feeling more positive but conscious of risks associated with Council agency work) recursion direction switch off with Intermediary System (online job search)]*

Eleanor

Interview one

a) Five reasons for resigning as Occupational Health Manager: workload pressure; the challenge of managing a high turnover of agency workers; feeling undervalued; wanting to spend more time with her husband, also an agency worker; and, as a result of landlord income feeling sufficiently financially secure to risk agency work.

[Environment (heavy workload, high turnover of agency workers, and feeling undervalued) recurses with Individual (more time with her husband who is also an agency worker) recurses with Other (financial security) recurses with Individual (attitude to transition risk) leads to recursion transition towards Occupational Health agency worker and landlord]

b) She combines agency and some training work for ex-work colleague's but feels very tired. Concerned with the poor quality of work observed in her first agency placement, she files a complaint with the agency owner, and then worries about being perceived as a 'troublemaker'. *[Social Intermediary (ex-work colleagues) and Market Intermediary: small agency recurses with individual (concerned about complaint made to smaller agency) leads to recursion direction towards bigger agency]*

c) A colleague recommends she move to the bigger agency where there is a more supportive employment consultant. *[Social Intermediary: Important Other leads to a recursion transition towards bigger agency and supportive employment consultant]*

Interview two

d) Engages with bigger agency but unhappy with employment consultant's pressure to join umbrella company. Starts to instigate incorporation and is searching for an accountant *[Intermediary system (agency, umbrella company) leads to recursion direction towards incorporation and engaging an accountant]*

e) Bigger agency's first placement wobbles her professional identity (feels like a second-class citizen) but she feels buffered by affiliation to her professional body. *[Intermediary System (contracting) recurses with Identity (professional recursion with contractor second class worker) recurses with Intermediary System (Professional Body) results in recursion accommodation identity professional contractor.]*

Interview three

f) Acknowledges the importance of her relationship with the employment consultant for contracts, as advised by her husband. The employment consultant is the gatekeeper of work and can offer support for difficult placements. *[Social Intermediary (husband) recursion accommodation accepting the importance of Intermediary employment consultant for finding work placements]*

g) Ex-work colleagues lose their training contract leading to Eleanor focusing on agency contracting *[Environment: market recurses with Social Intermediary (ex-work colleagues) and leads to recursion direction towards agency.]*

h) Eleanor declares herself incorporated and has engaged an accountant, as advised earlier by her husband *[Social Intermediary (husband) recurses with Intermediary System (agency and umbrella company, and incorporation and accountant) leading to direction recursion transition umbrella company to incorporation and accountant.]*

i) Believes compliance requirements means agencies are a necessity for gaining access to NHS and Social Services contract work *[Environment: compliance requirements recursion lock into bigger agency contracting]*

Dawn

Interview one

a) Focusing on earning money to address her pension deficit. *[Past recursion (unpaid care) with Other: money leads to recursion transition from carer and worker in alternative medicine to temporary, full time employee NHS IT Analyst work]*

b) Failed five NHS interviews at the same time as trying to prepare the family for Christmas. *[Environment (vacancies on NHS Direct) results in fatigue associated with five failed interviews whilst combining paid work with unpaid care work leads to recursion transition from NHS Direct to seeking agency opportunities]*

c) Brothers (also contractors) provide vision of well-paid, easy contracting work that sustains her commitment to contracting work *[Social Intermediary: (brothers) sustain recursion direction toward IT contracting]*

d) CV makeover by brother supports applications to agencies *[Social intermediary (brother) recursion direction agency]*

e) Online IT search engine (DICE) profiles agencies and employment consultants offering NHS IT contracting opportunities and highlights niche contracting opportunities requiring SQL. At the end of her temporary contract self-funds SQL training *[Intermediary System (online platform and agency) leads to recursion direction towards agencies and Individual recursion accommodation from NHS Direct to DICE, self-fund SQL training and agency]*

Interview two

f) SQL training and revamped CV attracts a key agency employment consultant she recognises from DICE. The consultant's phone call secures an interview and contract the same day. Believes the employment consultant has built up relationships with NHS employers in a certain region who have a constant recruitment requirement. *[Individual (SQL Training) recurses with Social Intermediary (brothers revamp CV) recurses with Intermediary System (Agency employment consultant recursion with Environment (NHS IT Manager) leads to recursion transition]*

Interview three

g) Previously supported brothers with their paper work and has just registered as a limited company.

[Social Intermediary (doing brother's paper work) recurses with Environment (NHS IT Analyst contracting) recurses with Individual (avoiding NHS standard recruitment and reducing transition fatigue) leads to change in employment status]

h) Brothers help to sustain her in contracting despite feeling an outsider at work.

Beth

Interview one

a) The stress of combining care of a school age child with a full-time employee executive role in the Civil Service leads to resignation and plans to transition back to consultancy work. *[Environment (stress related to male dominated, hierarchical structure, significant workload, and overrunning meetings making her late for the train and relieving the babysitter) recurses with caring for a school age child preparing for her 11+ exam. Situation leads to Individual (erosion of work confidence). The situation culminates in a recursion transition from employee to being economically inactive]*

b) Recently completed coaching course at a business college *[recursion learning]*. Ex Civil Service contacts enable her to return to the Civil Service as a self-employed coach delivering coaching. *[Recursion accommodation (becoming a work coach) recurses with Social Intermediaries (ex-work contacts) leads to recursion transition into a temporary, hourly, employee coaching].*

Interview two

c) Ex-Civil Service colleagues facilitate her Limited Company contract with the Civil Service to deliver recruitment and development services *[Environment (continuing to operate in the Civil Service space), Social Intermediaries (Civil Service work contacts) leads to recursion transition delivering second contract (delivering recruitment and development consulting) leads to recursion transition (employee to incorporation) to deliver contract through her Limited Company.*

d) Decides to continue her coaching training at the Business College because it develops her confidence and provides a network of support. *[Business College recurses with individual (confidence and identity) recursion accommodation to coach]*

Interview three

e) The Civil Service requires Beth's Limited Company to contract through one of the agencies signed up to the Government's Framework for Contingent Labour. She goes on to disclose the existence of a further tier of intermediary involved in billing.

[Environment (Government) constructs a recursion lock between Beth's Limited Company and the agency signed up to the Framework for Contingent Labour to deliver Government contract work. At the same time her company has to pass all billing through an additional intermediary (Capita) to arrange billing, constructing an intermediary system]

f) Beth reflects on the past and realises in her next job she will need to manage people's expectations more carefully, furthermore, be firm about home working, and avoid line management responsibility. She has been surprised at how much intermediaries charge the Government for their services. *[Recursion accommodation (Beth has developed criteria for choosing paid work to ensure it is compatible with providing care). She is surprised at the expenses incurred by Government when contracting through intermediaries]*

b) Reluctant public sector employees and subjective transitions

Fiona

Interview 1

a) Shocked by Council rejection of voluntary redundancy I and starts to actively search for work. *[Environment (Council withdrawal of the offer of voluntary redundancy) recurses with Individual (anger and shock) leading to setting direction towards active job search.]*

b) Looking for different work and Googles unusual jobs. *[Looking for something different but CV and lack of ideas sets direction to doing the same]*

c) Avoids Jobcentre that she believes is more punitive than helpful. *[Individual perceives Public Sector Intermediary (Jobcentre) as serving a punitive function rather than offering careers advice setting direction towards carrying on in her Council role]*

d) Visited University open day and is thinking about doing a degree. *[Intermediary Gap (lack of careers advice) sets direction towards Individual (carrying on in work). Engagement with Intermediary (University Open Day) sets direction towards returning to education and University]*

Interview 2

e) Starting to enjoy work again. *[Environment (Council's good terms and conditions) recurses with Individual (shock and anger) leads to accommodation Individual (carrying on in existing job despite being turned down for voluntary redundancy in this round of restructuring)]*

f) Hypothesises that Council is deliberately deploying a workforce reduction strategy of restructurings and news feeds maintaining pressure to leave. After each restructuring Council warn of reduced payouts, increasing pressures to exit.

[Environment (workforce reduction strategy) recurses with Individual (stress and fear of a reduced exit package) setting direction towards exiting the Council].

g) Enrolled on ten-week University Gateway programme to prepare for degree. *[Intermediary (University Open Day and University Gateway Programme) recursion with Individual (carrying on and seeking a new career direction) leads to carrying on with the Council and a transition into a 10 week University Gateway programme]*

h) Action for Children website advertises jobs in the charity sector. *[Individual (identity Sure Start worker) recursion with Market Intermediary (Action for Children Job Search Platform) setting direction towards remaining in childcare work in the third sector.]*

Interview 3

i) Council announces restructuring with cuts to redundancy package. The stress is buffered by interest in university opportunities and/or working for a charity. Latest Council news is that Childrens' Centres may be moving to Third Sector. *[Environment (restructuring and possibly inviting Third Sector organisations to take over Children's Centres) recurses with Individual (upset and already exploring opportunities in the Third Sector) setting direction towards working in Third Sector childcare provision.]*

Joanne

Interview one

a) Reflecting on the past, she recognized that work had become her life. *[Identity: Joanne describes how, in the past, the line between work (NHS Human Resources Manager) and life became blurred: it was her life]*

b) Government policy has raised her state pension age. She identifies as being one of the WASPI women; the acronym stands for women against state pension

inequality. She perceives needing both her occupational and state pension to be able to retire to support her and her daughter. It would not be right to ask her second husband to financially support them, he is not her father.

c) Her line manager suggests she takes partial retirement to free up time to care for her daughter and reduce her stress levels. She refuses because of the risks associated with wind down contracts. These risks include potentially losing out on redundancy payments and reduced employment protection; her contract could be terminated at any time. *[Policy (Environment) requires Joanne to work for longer) leads to accommodation towards remaining in work for longer setting direction towards Joanne taking an early pension and fixed term employee contract on reduced terms and conditions. Being an HR Manager, and knowledgeable about contractual terms and conditions sets direction towards rejecting the offer and accommodating to carrying on]*

Interview two

d) Acknowledges time she needed to take off work in order to care for her daughter and states she is a carer. *[Care work leads to subjective transition into new identity of carer]*

Interview three

e) Just returned from sick leave. Pressure at work is becoming more intense, she is feeling weary and just wants to retire *[Environment (staffing issue and workload pressure) recurses with mental well-being (feeling under pressure and stressed) sets direction towards retiring before her state pension age]*

c) Relocators

Sarah

Interview 1:

a) Recently made redundant from an ex-Civil Service organisation where she had been working as an education adviser. She has only just started working for a private education company in London, it is a permanent employee contract.

b) She does not feel comfortable in her new role since the company was taken over. The new company are insisting she commercialises her contacts. She and her husband have downsized and moved nearer to London to reduce her commuting time, as well as increase his chances of finding a job. His Civil Service Department is about to go through another round of restructuring. *[Individual (identity education) recursion accommodation (geographical house moves and changing to a more commercial education environment)]*

c) Two days after the email, she telephones to say that she has just failed her probation after refusing to commercialise her contacts with her professional body. *[Individual (professional identity) recursion direction away from (environment) commercial education work and short-term tenured posts.]*

Interview 2

d) Needs eight years of full-time work to address her pension deficit. *[Past (care and prioritising her first husband's career) recursion direction towards addressing pension deficit and search for eight years full time work]*

e) Whilst doing some casual work for her professional body she has applied for eight jobs and already has attended two interviews, with two more to go and the rest

outstanding. *[Market Intermediary (online platform) recursion direction towards education development roles]*

f) Believes being closer to London has generated more job opportunities although travel remains an important consideration. *[Recursion accommodation (moving closer to London) leads to more job opportunities, however, focuses on modes of transport. Individual (job security prioritized over travel) leads to recursion direction away from local opportunities)]*

g) Husband searches for jobs, checks over applications, prepares her for interviews, and offers emotional support, despite his own precarious situation. *[Social intermediary (husband's job is insecure) recursion direction to move closer to London]*

Interview 3

h) Accepts University B's offer: more secure, can get there by train, and no line management responsibility – less stressful. *[Individual (job security, mode of travel and minimum stress) set recursion direction towards University B.]*

Note: *Kaz (simple to complex transition) and Helen (transition into economic inactivity) had also undergone transitions. Kaz's transition had taken place before her interview and Helen's had been a relocation to a pre-existing holiday home.*

d) Simple to complex work transitions

Kaz*

When joining the study, Kaz and her family had already relocated hence being more closely aligned to simple and complex work.

Interview one

a) Previously a careers adviser employed by the Council, redundancy had followed the first wave of cuts, followed by her return to the Council on a series of temporary contracts. Resulting chronic job insecurity, and associated stress, had been perceived as a significant contributing factor to becoming ill. Her husband had been experiencing similar stress working for the Post Office. *[Redundancy followed by transition to casual work recurses with and husband's job insecurity recurses towards crisis in health and decision to transition.]*

b) Time to convalesce and research on the internet culminates in the family's plan to release financial capital by relocating from London to the Midlands. The resulting release of capital is invested in developing a rental business in the Midlands. *[Time to convalesce recurses with technology (online platforms engaged in property market) and sets direction towards releasing family financial capital to launch a rental business in the Midlands]*

c) Kaz had a sister living in the Midlands, providing a base to support their relocation. [Social intermediary (sister) sets direction towards moving to the Midlands acting as a base for the relocation]

d) Family capital had also included Mother in Law's previous investment in the London home and husband's recent Post Office voluntary redundancy package. *[Family financial capital (Mother in laws investment and husband's voluntary*

redundancy acts as a social intermediary setting direction recursion towards setting up their own business.]

e) The Jobcentre had proved unhelpful but social contacts had helped her find her first temporary contract in the Midlands. *[Public sector (Jobcentre) setting direction away from public sector careers support and recursion direction towards social intermediaries (friends) setting recursion transition into first college contract]*

f) Although disappointed when the college had not retained her, the contract, however, had not been a financial necessity. *[Rental business (financial independence) buffers precarious employment]*

g) Her next contract had materialised from a Google search. She had applied to a different college for a three-month careers coach contract that had subsequently been extended to six months, and she had been enjoying the work. *[Technology (internet and Google) recurses with local employment environment (three-month contract) transitions into a three-month contract subsequently extended to six months.]*

Interview two

h) Enjoying her new temporary contract and looking forward to the family summer holiday. Two out of their three recently purchased houses are currently generating rental income. *[Holidays and financial independence recurses set direction for personal wellbeing]*

i) Kaz turns down previous college request to return to work for them. She hopes her current temporary contract will convert into a permanent job because she is enjoying the work. *[Personal wellbeing (individual) recurses with employment market setting direction towards accommodating to precarious work.]*

Interview three

j) The family have enjoyed their summer holiday and since returning have purchased a further property. Their current portfolio consists of the following properties:

Small house in London for rent – (pre-interview one)

Family home currently being developed – (pre-interview one)

Temporary house where family are currently living. Once house above is completed the house will be rented out - (interview two)

Multiple occupancy house - her sons currently live in the property and are renting out a further two rooms to two students – (interview one)

[Further property purchases indicate accommodation to operating a family run property rental business]

k) Kaz's temporary job has converted into a full-time, term time only, permanent job and her income pays for family holidays. *[Short term contract transitions into permanent job]*

l) Kaz and her husband are conscious their future pensions are compromised and that their new business will need to address the risks. *[Family plan sets direction towards future financial if the rental business is not successful]*

Samantha

Interview one

a) Having children had meant giving up her lucrative job in the computer industry for the more flexible job of Further Education College IT lecturer. College

incorporation³⁷ had resulted in increased workload, stretched targets, and a clash of values, all whilst coping with a divorce. *[Past environmental and social conditions recurse with organisational conditions resulting in intolerable stress]*

b) Stressful conditions had left her no choice but to accept voluntary redundancy. Pension delays, however, means two more years of carrying on working. She has had no success with either general or more specialist education agencies with education agencies requiring secondary school qualifications. *[Organisation conditions leads to exit, recurses with delay to pension, recurses with financial insecurity results in carrying on working but in non-compliance education work]*

c) She is delivering three contracts:

- Internal quality assurance for a private training provider 2-3 day a week
- Sorting out a poorly taught A1 qualification for 1 day a week with a council
- An agency contract delivering one day of teaching through a college that further outsources her to wider community organisations.

[Agency and ex-work colleagues (intermediaries) transition into precarious, short term education contracts].

d) Living with adult son and cares for daughter's grandchild enabling her daughter to work. *[Norm responsibility for care recurses with complex work resulting in high levels of fatigue and stress compromising her health]*

Interview two

e) Made redundant from permanent private training provider job, and both agency and Town Council contracts will end in June. Unpaid attendance at conference leads

³⁷ The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 released Further Education Colleges from Local Authority control

to contracting for an awarding body. *[Three contracts (furnished by social intermediaries) have ended and previous attendance at a conference (unpaid work) leads to summer work - invisible recruitment system]*

f) Ex-manager invites her to join education consultancy, but she feels too old to deal with the workload. *[Age norms and emotional state (individual) leads to a recursion direction limits opportunity]*

g) Does not trust Linked In and perceives the Jobcentre as intrusive.

[Age norms lead to distrust of internet and anxiety about Jobcentre leads to recursion direction away from opportunities outside her occupational identity and locks into precarious post 16 education market]

Interview three

h) Agency contract with College D. ended in August, forwards CV to Quality Manager but he is made redundant. *[invisible recruitment fails in precarious organisation conditions]*

i) Does not trust Linked In and refuses ex-work colleagues further offer of becoming an associate. *[Age norms recurse with new opportunities that lock her out leading to her being unable to accommodate to the change]*

j) Former work colleague, and boss for town council contract sends links to vacancies. One opportunity resulted in a Skype interview that had felt intrusive and stressful. *[Ex-work colleagues offer support to widen her options but age norms and occupational identity limit these – contribute to locking her into precarious work].*

k) Awarding body work was stressful, and she visits the Doctors with stress. *[Awarding body work stressful and compromises health]*

l) Feels angry with the Government for pension policy delaying receipt of both occupational and state pension. *[perceives policy influences leading to exit and carry on working]*

Clare

Interview one

a) After 13 years with the police, she was TUPE'd across to a private company. An unbearable workload and a clash of values resulted in her decision to resign. *[Change in organisation conditions (public sector function outsourced to the private sector) recurses with Individual (increase in workload and a compromise of values) leading to transition]*

b) Her work coach helped her create an exit and transition plan. *[Market intermediary (coach) recurses with Individual (mitigating transition grief and planning for job search) resulting in recursion transition (exit) and recursion transition towards (local and flexible work)]*

c) She has signed up with national agencies (Hayes) and job search websites (jobs.ac.uk and Linked In), setting their feeds to local. She has also been priming her local employment agencies for launching into contracting. *[Individual (local and flexible) engages with Market Intermediaries (National agencies and Linked In) leading to engagement with national job search tools]*

d) Ex police boss had been planning to retire thwarting her opportunities to return to working through her contact with him.. *[Social Intermediary (Ex-boss) retiring locks out return to the police force - invisible recruitment]*

e) After exit, she will attend induction for volunteering at the local Heritage Centre. *[Market Intermediary (work search planning with coach) recurses with individual (local, flexible and congruent with values) recursion setting direction towards volunteering with Heritage Centre leading to later transition direction into relief adviser job]*

f) Ex police work colleagues will alert her to university job opportunities and introduce her to their contacts. *[Social intermediaries (ex-work colleagues' recurse with their contacts) recursion towards university teaching - invisible recruitment]*

Interview two

g) Has applied for a part-time time Relief Cultural Heritage Adviser role where she volunteers. *[Unpaid work leads to Relief Cultural Heritage Adviser job – invisible recruitment]*

h) Local agency had placed her in a school administrative assistant contract for 10 hours a week that leads to maternity cover in a school *[Individual (local and flexible) sets direction towards Market Intermediary (local agency) that leads to recursion transition into a ten-hour administrative assistant contract at the Diocese school – invisible recruitment]*

i) Ex-work colleague introduces Clare to a university contact that leads to a permanent contract for tutoring work. She is also doing some ad hoc invigilation work *[Social Intermediary (ex-work colleague) recursion transition to a permanent teaching job and casual invigilating - invisible recruitment]*

j) Personal coach and career consultant friends are deeper friends than network or coffee contacts. *[Social intermediaries are classified as deep friends or coffee contacts]*

k) Adopted sole trader status to support her husband's retirement plan to become a consultant. *[Social intermediary Husband (preparing for retirement and working as a consultant) leads Clare towards transition to sole trader status]*

Interview three

l) Volunteering has converted into becoming a permanent relief Cultural Heritage Adviser, a permanent casual contract. *[Unpaid work leads to recursion transition into permanent casual work as a Relief Cultural Heritage Adviser]*

m) Local agency contract has converted into maternity cover for 3 days a week, up to July 2017. *[Market Intermediary (local agency) places her in a contract for the diocese leading to recursion with a new social intermediary leading to a recursion*

transition into a temporary contract – extending her original contract and improving her pay]

n) Discovers university pay does not reflect the workload and plans to resign. *[Financial security provides Clare with the freedom to reject exploitive permanent work for more insecure contracting work]*

Rebecca

Interview 1

a) Two months earlier, Rebecca was made redundant from her private sector company role that involved leading on apprenticeships. She had signed on at the Jobcentre to draw on her mortgage protection insurance. At the same time, she had been living with a friend and renting her house out, all whilst finishing off some corporate social responsibility work for her ex-company. She had planned to invoice them once her Ltd company was running and placing on their preferred associate list. *[Organisation (ex-private sector employer) redundancy recurses with Individual (business) renting out her house and sets direction towards traditional Jobcentre intermediary to support claim for mortgage protection whilst holding back an invoicing to access associate list.*

b) Believes she is too old to return to recruitment. *[Individual (belief that the recruitment industry is ageist and the work is too precarious) sets direction away from recruitment industry]*

c) Enrolled on an Open University degree to disguise unemployment and potentially offer an opportunity to network. *[Drawing on education intermediary to disguise unemployment and offer a networking opportunity]*

Interview 2

d) On the one hand, nervous about raising her self-employed profile because of claiming benefit but, on the other hand, it is bad for business to be out of circulation for too long. It will get easier when she is on the New Enterprise Allowance (NEA). The benefit is designed to support the launch of new businesses. *[Individual (new Ltd company) recurses with public sector (Jobcentre) to maintain mortgage protection insurance, whilst keeping network warm for her Ltd company profile and not compromising her mortgage protection]*

e) Identifies as a CSR supplier and a limited company. *[Individual occupational identity (private sector employee), imposed identity (unemployed) transitions to preferred identity (Limited Company intermediary CSR supplier)]*

Interview 3

f) Jobcentre plus's National Enterprise Allowance course was disappointing. She describes the course as a form filling exercise, inappropriate for most of the people attending, and designed to be humiliating.

g) A charity has signed a Service Level Agreement with her company and commissioned eight days work from her *[Individual (Ltd company) transitions into charity paid work indicative of an invisible recruitment system]*

Kate

Interview 1

a) Poor management decisions, increased monitoring, interference in her professional work, and watching colleagues regularly crying in team meetings led to

her accepting VR from parenting office job with her council. *[Council conditions Individual (stress and, even during the interview, high levels of emotional grief) results in accepting voluntary redundancy and transitioning out.]*

b) Rejected by agencies. *[Market Intermediaries (no demand for parenting officer roles) sets recursion direction towards Jobcentre Plus]*

c) Jobcentre puts pressure on to take any job. *[Individual (grief and rejection from agencies) recursion with Public Sector Intermediary (Jobcentre Plus) leads to transition into the first job available]*

d) Combination of unpaid shift hours, husbands contracting hours, sons contracting hours and supporting him with child access over the weekends results in looking for other options *[Unpaid care work (household work and taking care of grandchild) and jobs unpaid and antisocial hours locks her out]*

Interview 2

e) Returns NHS Direct for same jobs with different surgeries not running weekend work and is offered new job. *[Environment (employment market: weekend working) recursion with Social (unpaid care on weekends) leads to transition out delivering paid weekend working]*

f) Surprised by the staff reaction to her leaving given her lack of commitment to the job. *[Individual (does not feel the same pride in her work – senses a reduction in commitment and work satisfaction – not feeling right) struggling to accommodate to transition to Doctors receptionist]*

Interview 3

g) Demands of paid and unpaid work leads to losing social contacts *[Time (little time left over from paid and unpaid work) recurses with social intermediaries (social*

network) leading to setting direction away from social network resulting in locking in Doctors receptionist work]

h) Feels uneasy about her new job: a sense of disloyalty to the old job, cannot commit, uncertain about the future therefore unable to plan *[Individual (experience of past transitions) leads to change in perspective about work - feeling uncertainty and inability to plan ahead]]*

e) Economic inactivity transitions

Jane

Interview one

a) In 2002, Jane was made redundant from the Post Office and left with a healthy redundancy and pension package. She continued working for a Post Office supply chain company but later resigned to care for her brother. Up to 2015, she was working as a full-time school data manager, but the job became increasingly difficult in the face of her elderly mother's increasing care needs. She will take a 25 per cent cut in her Post Office pension because she will be claiming before she is 60.

[Environment (increasing work-load pressure, inflexible work deadlines, lack of state provision of care) recurses with money (access to previous Post Office pension later linked to Union) recurses with Identity (responsibility for care) leads to recursion transition to unpaid care work and casual work or economic inactivity.]

b) Friends text her about a temporary school data manager post and tell her about a local garden centre that holds a list for local, casual, work. Her mother looks much better since she has been able care for her properly. *[Social intermediaries (Friends forward job opportunities) recursion direction towards economic activity. Her mother looks much better – recursion accommodation to care]*

c) Her Husband suggests she considers her full-time caring role as a job. *[Social intermediary (Husband) recursion accommodation to constructing full time care as a job]*

Interview two

d) She is taking her Post Office pension early and, reflecting back, she appreciates the Post Office Union's pressure to join the scheme. *[Past Intermediary (Post Office Union) recursion sets direction providing finance to enable her to stop paid work and care for her mother.]*

e) She has started her seasonal work at the garden centre. Her husband's job at the local council is under threat due to cuts. He hopes he will receive a redundancy package. *[Intermediary (past friend supplies) leads to transition recursion into casual part time garden work]*

f) She recalls a recent conversation about car insurance and the shock of the person on the end of the phone classifying her employment status as retired. *[Norm Intermediary (Car insurance clerk imposes identity of retired) recursion sets direction Identity (unsure to retired)]*

Interview 3

g) Jane declares that she and her husband are retired, although, she will continue her seasonal work when the opportunity arises. They share the care of her mother and she has got used to being retired. *[Norm Intermediary (Media - quiz shows) recursion Identity (care and casual work) recursion accommodation Identity (status of retired with no previous occupational status)]*

h) Feels relief at finding that she can afford to live on her pension and still afford costly items. *[Other money (reduced pension) recursion accommodation living on less money recursion transition to Identity (retired)]*

Louise

Interview one

a) Louise has been a single parent for a long time and raised her children whilst working as a full time Counsellor. She experienced several redundancies but has always managed to pay into an occupational pension. Later, she makes the point that losing her day a week with the private company had been a severe financial loss. On the other hand, it would have been more of a problem if she had not been able to access her pension. She will gain access to her pension when she is 62, and she is currently 61 and 11 months. *[Social (as a single parent has always worked full time and paid into an occupational pension) recurses with future Other Money (has an occupational pension) recursion setting direction towards retiring]*

b) Until recently, Louise had been working as a Counsellor on two different contracts. She had been delivering a days work through Relate, a charity, to a GP's surgery and a further days telephone counselling from home, through her old company. The latter contract was much better paid contract, and it was from this contract she had recently been made redundant. *[Shock – made redundant from her day a week telephone counselling contract: the more lucrative contract]*

c) She recently visited the Jobcentre to sort out her national insurance contributions. She reflected on the visit as an interesting experience because she had referred clients to them in the past. From her experience, however, she concluded the Jobcentre would be of no help in finding her work. *[Public sector intermediary (Jobcentre) provides no assistance in finding further work recursion direction towards retirement]*

d) Her daughter and son in law have been helping her build a website to attract a wider client base for any potential private work. *[Social Intermediary (son and daughter) recursion with Internet (website advertising her new private counselling company) recursion direction towards supporting development of private counselling work.]*

e) Louise talks about the British Association of Counselling Practitioners (BACP) journal that outlines how private counselling can be an expensive choice. The article leaves her uncertain about further private work and she plans to offer more support to look after her grandchildren. *[Identity seeking a well- balanced life recurses with care (three days looking after grandchildren, and she feels very tired) recursion direction towards retirement]*

f) Speculating on the future, she plans to continue with her Relate work although her second husband finds her insistence on continuing to work annoying because it rules out long holidays - they own a holiday home in Majorca. Louise, on the other hand, feels she could not be away from the grandchild for so long especially as one of them is about to have an operation. *[Social (work life balance and sharing time with her husband) recurses Identity (role in supporting family members) leading to recursion direction towards care work and retiring]*

g) She might consider more private work, assuming she could integrate it comfortably into her work life balance. As to the one day a week commitment at the surgery, there has been talk of bringing in further client assessment paperwork. From her point of view, this undermines the therapeutic relationship of her work. If the surgery were to broach it with her then she would consider giving up work. *[Identity (search for work life balance) recursion with Organisation (assessment paperwork) sets recursion direction towards retirement]*

Interview two

h) Louise telephones to let me know that she has decided to stop work, retire, and support her family. She explains there are many reasons why she has come to this decision. *[Recursion transition to retirement and unpaid care work]*

Jenny

Interview one

a) Jenny was registered as a limited company, working as a contractor. Her work involved contracting through an agency to a local authority delivering management services. She had recently resigned from her contract for several reasons: firstly, contracting for three months was fine but her contract was extended to 18 months and she had chosen to be a contractor not an employee; secondly, she had been living away from home and renting, and she wanted more time in her own home; and thirdly, her elderly relative was very frail and dashing up and down the motorway was very tiring. When we met, she was expecting to be placed in a new contract. *[Identity (contractor and sense of responsibility for meeting care needs of elderly relative) recursion with Intermediary (Local Authority and agency) involved in continuously extending contract recursing with Environment (being away from home and renting, challenging travel conditions, and increasing fragility of elderly relative in the context of perceived poor social care provision) leads to past recursion transition from agency contract to economic inactivity]*

Interview two

b) Before leaving her last contract, the agency's employment consultant had hinted at a contract coming up in a local authority, closer to home. Being loyal to the agency, rather than pursuing the opportunity, she had waited for them to get back to her. Later, she discovered the vacancy had been advertised through a different agency. She raised this with her agency's employment consultant who explained there had been a breakdown in the relationship between her agency and the employer's recruiter, Capita. Consequently, Capita passed the contract to a different agency. *[Individual (integrity towards employment consultant and agency) recursion with Intermediary System (breakdown in relationship between agency and recruiter's (Capita) employer (Local Authority) leads to recursion setting direction towards economic inactivity]*

c) Ideally, Jenny would like a part-time contract closer to home. Being part time and closer to home would allow her to balance her time and offer more support to her relative. *[Identity (contractor, sense of home, caring responsibility) recurses with Intermediary System (demand for geographical flexibility) recursion setting direction towards care and economic inactivity]*

d) She sees a vacancy on the internet but knows it will have been filled. She believes that vacancies posted by agencies are probably already filled but they are kept up for a few days to attract CV's. CV's are used as an agency marketing tool to attract employers: demonstrating their capacity to supply 'just in time' quality workers. *[Identity (belief that agencies upload vacancies on internet job search engines to harvest CV's, even when they are filled) recurses with Intermediary (Internet employment search engine) recursion lock for engaging with particular agency employment consultants]*

e) Jenny believes her best chance of finding contracts lie with employment consultants. Not only are they sector experts, but they have good relationships with employers, ensuring they are first to access opportunities. *[Past Intermediary (help from employment consultants finding contracts) recurses with Identity (belief that employment consultants are sector experts and first to be told about contracts) leads to recursion lock into engaging with particular agencies and their employment consultant]*

f) Jenny is concerned about being out of contracting for too long. She describes how a colleague was left behind when critical legislation was passed. Consequently, he missed the Authority's training. *[Past experience (memory of a contracting colleague who was out of contracting when new legislation came in. The outcome was that he missed key local authority training on implementing the legislation, consequently finding it difficult to get back in) recurses with Identity (risk of being out of contracting too long) leads to recursion setting direction and recursion lock to continue to keep in touch with agencies and their employment consultants and remain in contracting]*

Interview three

g) Jenny has stopped searching for contracts because she is concentrating on looking after her elderly relative. *[Environment (challenges of travelling long distances for contracts) recurses with care work leading to Identity (relief at not having to travel) recurses with Intermediary no local part-time contracts available]*

h) She is considering her finances in the context of transitioning to care work or economic inactivity. *[Other Money (reduced income recurses with carers allowance) recursion transition economically inactive recurses with Identity (carer/non-trading company)]*

Helen*

When joining the study, Helen had already established her life in Barbados hence aligning more closely with a transition in economic inactivity rather than relocating.

Interview one

a) Loss of both parents, health issues and a number of incidents at the BBC, primarily related to its dominant male culture, led to her application for voluntary redundancy. *[Individual responsibilities for care (individual) recurses with demand for care (social) recurses with BBC dominant male culture (organisation) leading to transition recursion to voluntary redundancy]*

b) She has taken up the offer of support from a private careers company and the training to become an executive coach. *[Organisation (BBC) funds private careers company setting direction towards executive coaching]*

c) There may be opportunities for her to work with her ex-boss who has also left the corporation. *[Social intermediary setting direction towards working in the same business sector]*

d) There is no financial pressure to find a job and she is a little worried about what she will be doing in her spare time; she calls herself semi-retired. *[Financial security sets direction towards semi-retired as an employment status]*

e) Her husband is convalescing in their second home in Barbados and she plans, initially anyway, to fly out and join him when she can. *[Voluntary redundancy leads to geographical transition to living in her Barbados home]*

Interview two

f) Is in Barbados and plans to go travelling and spend some money. *[Using technology (Skype) setting direction towards online coaching and contact three she is learning (accommodation) how to coach through Skype]*

g) Between contacts, she has been in touch with her ex-BBC colleagues and is exploring possible contracts in Washington and Vienna. She will also follow up offers on her return. In turn, she has been passing vacancies she has spotted on websites to her ex-colleagues. *[Ex-work colleagues (social intermediaries) recursion setting direction towards available employment opportunities in the same sector – indicative of an invisible recruitment system]*

h) She may rent out her houses in the UK if she needs extra fund, but there are no financial pressures on her at the moment. *[Financial security (individual) recurses with additional property accommodation towards remaining in Barbados and enjoying semi-retirement]*

Interview 3

i) She is bored with coaching and internet speed is a problem *[Geographical location recurses with technology leading to transition away from online coaching]*

j) More recently, her husband has started a contract in Dubai, and she is reluctant to remain in Barbados by herself - taking job hunting more seriously now *[Husband*

(social) is involved in setting direction towards taking her search for a job more seriously]

k) She and her husband plan to spend Christmas in Barbados and she has spoken to a friend/estate agent about renting out her UK property. *[UK rental market (environment) sets direction and accommodates towards renting out her UK house to contribute towards her finances]*

f) Held in transition

Chantelle

Interview one

a) After having children, Chantelle combined a variety of bit and pieces of work whilst raising her children. Her last significant contract ended in 2015 when a temporary college job had failed to convert into a permanent post. Currently, she has been doing about five hours a week paid work: two hours for a local school and three hours, off and on, private tuition. Most of her time has been taken up with winding down her Mother in Law's estate, supporting her youngest daughter with managing accommodation in London and more light touch support for her eldest daughter, in her final year at university. She is also responsible for all the domestic work in order to up her husband's time, needed to meet the demands of a busy media career. *[She has always put family first (individual identity - homemaker) prioritising Husbands job, sets direction towards remaining in part time local work (financial security) sets direction to remaining in precarious part time local work]*

b) In the past, found jobs in the Times Education Supplement (TES), although, her private tuition contract hours resulted from posting an advert in her village newsletter. When she comes to look for work again plans to use TES online. *[Plans to focus on part time and local work setting direction towards TES and village newsletter as job search tools and makes no mention of local agencies for supply]*

c) She is uncertain about her health and is waiting for a hospital operation and there is some uncertainty about the recovery time. Plans to start looking for a new post around Easter time *[Awaiting an operation (individual health) sets direction to waiting for her operation and transitions into putting job search on hold]*

Interview two

d) Describes herself as feeling much better but needing to remain flexible to continue to remain on standby for the family. She continues to manage her daughter's accommodation in London. *[Continuously sourcing accommodation in London (social) detracts from time needed to search for teaching jobs leading to transition into standby]*

e) She has managed to continue her few teaching hours with the help of Skype. *[Despite being bedridden, whilst recovering from her operation (individual) she is able to teach through Skype (accommodation) to maintain her hours]*

f) Continues to be concerned by the future of language teaching in schools as a result of Government reforms. *[Perceives Government policy (environment) as responsible for the loss of language teachers in schools – the subject was not privileged in the national curriculum locking her out of part time local French A Level teaching]*

g) She has gained an extra student: an old friend of her daughter's [Interaction with social leads to recursion towards further teaching hours and setting direction towards temporary precarious hours]

h) During her recovery, she has been enjoying several MOOC (online learning) courses [Accommodation towards online learning but has not considered her own opportunity to deliver online teaching]

i) Ideally, she would like to return to local part time teaching in September. She continues to look through TES but there is nothing available. *[Accommodating to her stalled job search]*

Interview three

j) Co-ordinating both daughter's accommodation and delivering four and a half hours teaching a week - a reduction of two and a half hours. She is concerned about time and costs been absorbed by their daughter remaining in London – there is a limit.

[Reduced teaching hours and preoccupation with continuously search for Daughter's accomodation in London sets direction towards economic inactivity]

k) Continues to monitor the TES for part time local jobs and plans to start seriously searching in December. *[Accommodating to transition into stalled job search or economic inactivity and focusing on the needs of her children]*

l) References the influence of Government reforms on students taking up A-level French, the challenge of finding a job at the age of 50 and believes you can't have it all (job and a happy family) and personally remain well. *[Beliefs about Government reforms, age and putting family first recurse with availability of local work leading to accommodation to stalled job search or economic inactivity]*

Liz

Interview one

a) As a Council librarian, her career was punctuated by restructurings and redundancies leading to a career change. She had become a Partnership Co-ordinator for Children's Centres whilst studying for a Sociology Degree. Currently, she is on a career break from the Council and at university studying for a doctorate. She has no intention of returning to the Council and believes she will never be a librarian again. *[Past environment (librarian career path ends as Council receives cuts leads to new career that in turn is being cut) leads to transition to career break and higher education study (ongoing transition work preparing for a third career change or a career stall?)]*

b) Being on a career break enables her to keep in touch with changes at the Council and secure casual electoral work. Combining Council casual work with some casual exam invigilation at the university, has enabled her to maintain her standard of living. *[Combining scholarship funding with casual work enables her to maintain her*

standard of living helping her accommodate to continuous transition working - a situation difficult to define – a stall?]

c) Whilst at University, she has managed to bring her IT and research skills up to date enabling her to be more proactive on Linked In and some of the academic job search platforms. She plans to set up a Facebook page to support her research area that focuses on the influence of austerity in her home city. She has attended a number of seminars at her university that have offered three career routes: early career fellowship and publication route, postdoctoral research route or hang around in the hope of being offered an assistant job. *[Environment recursion with individual learning sets direction continuous transition working that supports raising her online profile and preparing for transition into academic employment]*

d) She has been actively networking - engaging with the Head of the Credit Union, as part of her PhD, has led to the idea of working together to apply for lottery funding to evaluate the organisation's debt service. Networking with the university's lead for Community and Engagement, led him to suggest she scope a course and get back to him with the chance of it being paid. She is also considering going to Tokyo for a conference. *[Environment (university) recurses with Individual (career imagination) setting direction towards transition working towards wider opportunities. Organisations (Credit Union and University) recurse with Individual (career imagination) setting direction towards more casual work opportunities – indicative of an invisible recruitment system]*

e) Liz is actively monitoring university internal and external vacancies and has identified a job she might consider in the future – advertised on the internal university jobs board. *[Environment (University vacancy systems transition work) sets direction towards working for the university]*

f) Her mother carried on working into her 70's so Liz sees no reason why she shouldn't carry on working at least another ten years. *[Individual norm (precedent set by her mother) sets direction towards carrying on working]*

Interview two

g) She has been continuing to develop and check her online profile. *[University learning (individual) accommodation to maintaining transition working (maintaining online profile) towards seeking academic career opportunities]*

h) Senses her geographical horizons widen, but is more aware of how her age and appearance may be a barrier to progression. She appreciates that any university interviews she attends are quite likely to involve decisions about age. She is also acutely aware she may not have the energy levels to sustain the stresses and strains of meeting university academic challenges whilst teaching, looking for work and trying to maintain a work life balance. *[Environment (university) leads to individual accommodation (understanding age hierarchy and energy demands of teaching) setting direction away from academic life]*

i) Nevertheless, she has been continuing to improve the quality of her HE networks for example engaging with the Doctoral Training Centre by attending their committee meetings. *[Environment (university networking) recurses with accommodation to transition work that recurses with (Individual) accommodates to organization's invisible recruitment system]*

j) Work involving publication is age blind so this might be her best opportunity. *[Environment (university) recurses with individual (sense of age) accommodating to organisation's ageism by focusing on publication.]*

k) She is starting to look at the Guardian's education vacancies to broaden opportunity base *[Environment (university) recurses with Individual (age) setting transition work away from academic opportunities].*

m) She speculates about leaving the UK and moving to Europe and if there were opportunities related to her PhD topic, she would take them. *[Environment (university) recurses with Individual (career imagination) setting direction away from the UK.]*

Interview three

n) Newly acquired knowledge of online job search tools (Academia, Linked In) are being deployed to extend her contacts and she is raising her Phd's profile through Facebook. *[Organisation (University and online tools) recurses with Individual (learning how to make the most of technology) setting direction towards ongoing transition working in search of employment]*

o) She is hesitant about converting her casual Council work into university teaching because it is more flexible – marking has to be turned around in 72 hours. *[Organisation (university) setting direction towards lower quality casual work – teaching]*

p) Access to quality university contacts has improved her knowledge of how higher education works. As a result of these quality contacts, she has identified opportunities for collaborative funding bids, and these may prove useful in the future. Recently, she has attended an event that strengthens her role, as an influencer. She may be able to bring together two universities to make a bid for funds to do some work in her city. Ideally, she would like to bring all her network contracts into the bid and, in so doing, will also contribute towards her Phd. *[Organisation (university) setting direction towards short term academic project work]*

q) She is more aware of how her appearance and ageing will influence her university chances and continues to focus her attention on publishing. *[Organisation (university) recursing with (individual) accommodation to age barriers.]*

r) She believes opportunities in higher education focus on short term contracts that tend to be performative: not what she is looking for! On the other hand, she also feels, like she is shedding the skin of her old council identity as she moves into her new PhD student identity, and starts to feel more relatively secure. *[Organisation (university) recurses with Individual supporting accommodation to PhD student identity]*

Sally

Interview 1

a) She is three years out of a self-financed Masters in Public Health and is still actively searching for work. When she entered the course there had been lots of public health analyst jobs around. She speculates that when all the NHS Observatory staff were transferred into Councils, the Council's were in the middle of redundancies and redeployments with many of them redeployed into health analyst work, however, someone without her Masters training would+ have struggled to deliver the role.

[Social finance (self-funded Masters) and environment (Government policy of transferring public health analysts into Councils that were undergoing cuts) recurses with her exit from university leading to transition into continuous transition work seeking a job]

b) She continues to monitor university websites and a number of online job boards for analyst vacancies but with no luck so far. Online job boards such as WM Jobs, Guardian online, and university websites are disappointing because their jobs are out of travelling range. *[Online website (intermediaries) opportunities involve travelling too far and lock her in continuous transition work]*

c) Recently attended a self-financed wealth investment course that has inspired her to consider writing a book (related to her Masters) and provided her with an idea of building an investment tool. *[Attending a wealth management course (intermediary) sets direction towards starting her own business]*

d) She has also engaged with a mental health support group called Rethink that supports people who have recovered from mental health crisis with search for work; she manages a significant mental health disorder. She is planning to attend an interview with them tomorrow. *[She finds out about a Charity (Rethink) setting direction towards the third sector; they help people managing mental health crisis find work]*

Interview 2

e) She has attended a two week course run by a charity called Rethink. She has also been made aware of their close collaboration with Jobcentre Plus. She has met a group of other users and they have decided to form their own self-help group and are meeting in a coffee shop. *[Individual (mistrust) sets direction away from Jobcentre Plus and charity (new social intermediary) towards participation in a self-help group]*

f) She has contacted the NHS Mental Health Team and they have recommended an organisation called Step Up. Step up has persuaded her to do some volunteering in a school, possibly exam invigilating, and she is wondering if being in a school will change her mind about becoming a Maths teacher. *[Mental Health team and Step up (social intermediary) leads to setting direction towards becoming a maths teacher that she rejects but she continues to volunteer at the school transition to volunteering]*

Interview 3

g) She described Jobcentre Plus as a 'terrible' environment. The computers were too old and there was a belief that people should be desperate to do anything and the Jobcentre encouraged them to take anything. *[Quasi-public sector and charity intermediary (Jobcentre and charity) recurses with Individual (mistrust) and sets direction towards a selfhelp group]*

h) She has approached the NHS Mental Health's Teams Step Up service that offers a more individualised service that actually canvasses employers on her behalf. The Step Up adviser has highlighted that free online training courses are not accredited and may not be recognised by other organisations. *[Quasi-public sector and charity intermediary sets direction away from free online learning]*

Appendix 10: Interview memory prompt

1. Preliminary Checks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participant reminder – text/email 2 days before. • Venue confirmation and health and safety checks. • Recording equipment checks.
2. Precondition checks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First interview – introductions • Time, issues, concerns, phones – ensure comfort. • Information sheet check informed consent and permission to proceed *audio recorded and signed. • Easing in - neutral topic
3. Identify current work-state(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you describe your current employment situation? • How else do you use your time?
4. Reflect on past/present work-state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you come to arrive at this work pattern? • What enabled you to access this work pattern, how did it happen? (<i>*note use example from previous questioning</i>) • Tell me about these - what, where, when, how?
5. Speculate on the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What ideas do you have for future patterns of paid and unpaid work? • How will you go about making it/them happen? • What influences can you engage with to make this happen? • How will they help you?
6. Next Steps In the present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you leave this room what actions will you take?
7. Closure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have any more thoughts, comments or additional information to support my understanding of the influences you mentioned? • Are there any influencers you plan to engage with and how will you engage with them beyond today? <p><i>I will write up a summary of our discussion and send it to you by (date). Would you mind reading it, adjusting as necessary and emailing it back (where possible or I will send a stamp addressed envelope)? It will form the basis of our next meeting. Is it worth setting the date for that now or should I send you an email/call nearer the time?</i></p>

Appendix 11: Participant information sheet and consent form



THE INFLUENCE OF LABOUR MARKET INTERMEDIARIES ON OLDER GRADUATE LEVEL WOMEN

My name is Lorraine Johnson and I am a Second Year PhD student at Warwick University, Institute of Employment Research. Before you decide to take part in my research I would like you to understand what the research is about what it will involve.

The research is a small-scale study investigating digital and face to face influences on older graduate level women looking for new work opportunities. It is hoped the findings will inform policy and the transition support services helping them. The study is relevant because increasing numbers of this group will be making transitions as a result of further job cuts across the public sector. At the same time these women are expected to work for longer because their state pension age has been raised.

If you are willing to be a participant the experience will involve:

- a) being interviewed (face to face) a minimum of three times by me at a time that is convenient to you. EXCEPT if you have already made a recent work transition in which case you will only be interviewed once.
- b) Having your interview recorded – the recording will only be used by me to make a detailed summary with key quotes;
- c) reading through my summary to check it is accurate;
- d) mutually telephoning, emailing or posting to arrange interviews to arrange interviews and to keep me updated on new developments.

Project data will be stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act, it will be kept according to University procedure for a minimum of five years after the project. Consent forms and information sheets will be shredded and electronic data will be destroyed using secure deletion software.

If anything is not clear please contact me. Alternatively, if you are not happy with either the project or myself please feel free to contact Dr Sally-Anne Barnes by email at xxxxxx.

To confirm that you have given your permission to be contacted for this purpose, please complete the consent form and return it to Lorraine Johnson.

Lorraine Johnson
Doctoral researcher
Mobile: [xxxxxx](tel:xxxxxx)
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Participant Consent Form

Full title of Project: The Influence of Labour Market Intermediaries on Older Graduate Level Women

Please circle:

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.

Yes No

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my consent at any time.

Yes No

I understand that the information I provide will only be used for the purposes of this research.

Yes No

I understand that no details of named individuals will be included in the report.

Yes No

I agree to the interview being audio taped.

Yes No

I agree that the researchers may use some of the things I say when writing a report on the understanding that my name will not be mentioned.

Yes No

I understand that the information collected will remain confidential, unless I say anything that makes the researcher concerned that there is a risk of harm to me or someone else. In these circumstances I understand that the researcher must report this information to the relevant agency that can provide assistance.

Yes No

I agree to take part in the above study.

Yes No

Participant

Person taking consent

Name (initials).....

Witness name.....

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